

GENDER ROLES AND SYMBOLIC SYSTEMS  
ON AN AEGEAN ISLAND

by

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### ABSTRACT

This thesis is based on fieldwork on the Greek island of Fourni in the Aegean, in which the main focus was women's position in social organization and in symbolic systems. After a general description of the island (history, politics, economy, social stratification), the thesis deals with three major topics: gender roles, the idiom of honour and shame, and women in religion and magic.

1. Women's economic roles and the constraints on their involvement imposed by their reproductive roles are considered. In the realm of kinship, the most intriguing feature is matrifocality. Similarly, domestic organization is matrifocal, which has significant implications for male-female power dynamics in the domestic domain. Ideological aspects of gender roles are also considered, and the antagonism inherent in the relation between the sexes and their conceptualisation of each other. Women in Fourni are by no means restricted within the domestic domain; they have important roles in the structuring of social relations that make for community cohesion and social reproduction: kinship networks, friendship between families, local trade contacts, public service transactions.
2. The Fourni material on honour and shame is very different from what has been reported from elsewhere in the Mediterranean, and questions Mediterraneanists' assumptions of cultural unity in the moral code. There is great cultural emphasis on sex, which constitutes a major topic of discussion between the sexes in everyday life and on ritual occasions. The concept of honour is not confined to males, and the concept of shame is not confined to females. Differences in

the constraints on sexual virtue and in the moral code between men and women are slight. There is a high incidence of adultery, women play a major role in resolving violations of the code and are viewed as the guardians of their own sexual virtue.

3. To discuss the Greek Orthodox religion I make use of the distinctions between Great and Little Traditions; elements of both traditions are described, as is the realm of magic, in enough detail to provide a map on which women's role and involvement can be discussed. It is not the universalistic features of the Great Tradition but the particularistic features of the Little Tradition that have been elaborated in the community and are the focus of symbolic conceptualizations of Fourni social relations, but the symbolic structures of the Little Tradition do not reveal much differentiation between male and female. The sexual division of labour in religion seems to follow the division of practical labour. It is suggested that women's greater involvement in religion and magic than men is an extension of their greater involvement in social organization, social reproduction, and the maintenance of social cohesion.

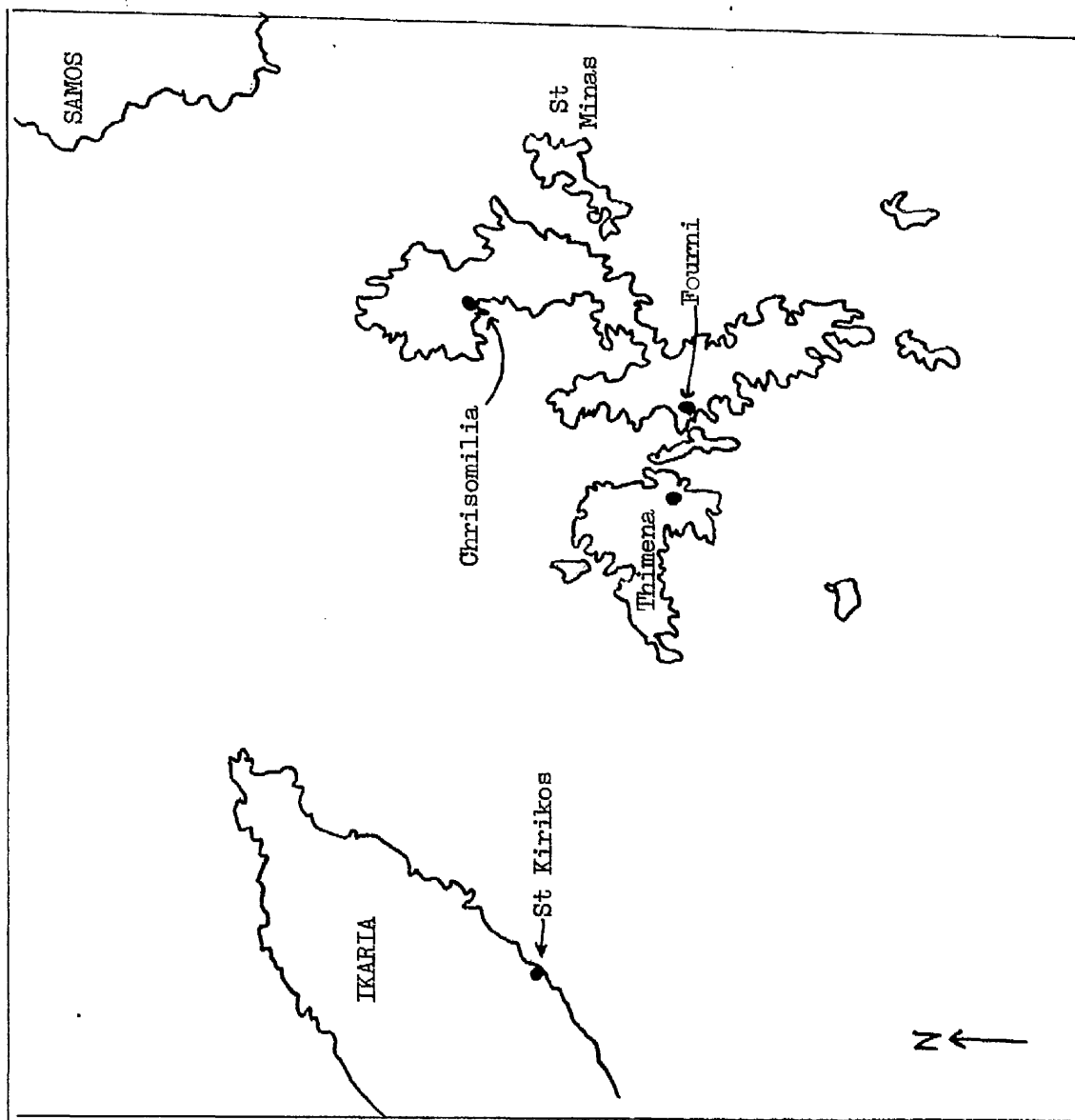


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MAP OF FOURNI ISLAND



## PREFACE

During my three years as an undergraduate student in Social Anthropology, I became interested in the recent shift towards the study of women and the reasons behind it. The more I read on the subject, the more I became aware of the fact that anthropology, which claims to be the only social science with a holistic approach to the study of societies, had never fulfilled that claim. Until very recently, social anthropologists have confined the study of a community to the study of the men in that community. Probably without even realizing it, they ignored women completely, or at least they were interested in them only in so far as they were factors in social phenomena affecting men, e.g., in marriage practices and the related property transactions, in the accumulation of male prestige - especially in polygynous and gerontocratic societies.

During the early 1970s, however, the andro-centrism of anthropological studies was heavily criticized, and women became not only a legitimate but, even more, an urgent subject of analysis.

My own involvement in the study of women started during my second undergraduate year when I wrote one of my three long essays in Ethnography (which were taken instead of an examination paper) on women in gerontocratic societies. The following summer (July-October 1979) I did fieldwork in the Greek island of Lesbos, focusing on the economic and power aspects of the male-female relationship. As a result, I wrote a dissertation for my BA with the title 'Sex Segregation in a Greek Fishing Community'.

In July 1981, I submitted a research proposal at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. And in August, I started fieldwork on the island of Fourni in the Greek Aegean Sea.

The topic of my research proposal was gender roles and their ideological aspects in a Greek rural community. I proposed to examine first the structuring of the male-female relationship within the overall social organization, and then, the conceptualization of gender roles, the ideological reproduction of these, and their expression in symbolic fields.

For that purpose I had selected four major areas for research.

1. First was the role of women in the economy of the community, on the premise that a basic determinant of the position of social actors in any society is their participation in the social relations within the sphere of material life. The line of inquiry I propose to pursue was the examination of the differential participation of the two sexes in the separate but parallel structures of production and reproduction, and of the constraints thereupon imposed on the determination of the position of women in the given community.
2. Second was the kinship structure, because kinship seems to constitute the basic social relations on which social organization in rural Greek communities is based, as anthropological studies have revealed (Campbell, 1964; Friedl, 1959, 1961; Du Boulay, 1974; Vernier, 1984; Peristiany, 1976; Kenna, 1971). Kinship, hence, provides a framework within which various aspects of gender roles can be related to each other and understood. Related to that is the organization of the domestic domain, the study of which can provide further insight on the structuring of the male-female

relationship. Finally, the differential participation of men and women in the domestic domain and the public domain comprises another essential field of inquiry for the study of gender roles in rural Greece.

3. Thirdly, I intended to investigate the idiom of Honour and Shame, which is encountered as a common parameter throughout all Mediterranean communities. This moral code encapsulates a differential conceptualization and evaluation of the male and the female. I proposed to look in detail into the moral values of the community for probable differences (which I suspected to exist) in the manifestation of Honour and Shame and consequent differences in the conceptualization of male and female nature.
  4. Finally, I wanted to examine the sphere of magic and religion, which was intended to be the main research topic of my fieldwork. As I was interested in the ideological reproduction and the symbolic expression of male and female, I considered the examination of women's role in religion of great pertinence for two reasons. First, religion constitutes a symbolic system where the beliefs and concomitant evaluations of the differences between male and female, among other social relations, are conceptualized in either explicit or implicit form. Secondly, the religious sphere was pointed out by recent reports on both Islamic and Christian communities as an area of significant female activities in the Mediterranean.
- Accordingly, I proposed to examine two aspects of the way religion and the male-female relationship correlate:
- a) The sexual division of religious labour (Davis' term, 1980), i.e., the differential participation of men and women in religious practices.

- b) The interplay of religious and secular beliefs on the two sexes, as well as a possible articulation of aspects of the gender roles which lack an explicit formulation in secular terms.

Through the investigation of these four social realms, I hoped to reach an understanding of the particular form of the male-female relationship in the community where I would undertake fieldwork. At the same time, I wanted to address, through the material I would collect, certain problems in anthropological discourse.

One of the theoretical points that intrigued me when I was acquainting myself with the Mediterranean literature before submitting a research proposal, was the assumption of cultural unity in the manifestation of the idiom of Honour and Shame. The well-developed theoretical framework for the understanding of this moral code (Campbell, 1964; Peristiany, 1966; Pitt-Rivers, 1977; Antoun, 1968; Blok, 1980; Schneider, 1971; Papanek, 1973; Jacobson, 1970) has dominated anthropological thought to such an extent that it has prevented the perception of different manifestations of the phenomenon within the same geographical area. Random information and personal impressions upon visits to various Aegean islands, in combination with my short fieldwork on Lesbos (1980) and, more importantly, with the controversial findings of anthropological reports on the area (Herzfeld, 1980c; Dubisch, 1972; Vernier, 1977, led me to question the manifestation of a uniform code of Honour and Shame in all Mediterranean societies. A major aim of my research was, therefore, to test this theory of cultural unity.

That meant that rather than taking cultural unity as a given and looking for those variables traditionally associated with Honour and Shame (i.e., competitiveness among male heads of households,

the role of women as scarce resources, dependence of a man's honour on the virtue of the women closely related to him, association of avoidance rules between the sexes and male authority, honour and shame as an ideological mechanism aiming at the solidarity of the family group under the strain of social fragmentation, etc.), I would try to elicit the form, function and determinants of Honour and Shame in terms of the social form of the studied community.

In this thesis, I discuss this problem in the chapter on Honour and Shame. The data I collected during fieldwork support my initial questioning of a uniform manifestation of the code of Honour and Shame throughout the Mediterranean. They show, instead, that this moral code may involve distinct variables and assume distinct forms and functions in different cultural contexts.

Some readers may think that in that chapter I am dwelling at too much length and detail on the sexual language of the community investigated. I have done so on purpose. The literature on Honour and Shame variables seems to indicate (not very explicitly, but rather through vague references on modest behaviour, dress, movement and attitude, and on communication governed by avoidance and modesty rules) that sex is a muted subject, or at least that sexual topics are not discussed in public. The emphasis placed on sex in the community investigated (both verbally and in actual practice, as well as in the formation and reproduction of behaviour stereotypes) is so strong that I felt it necessary to give a detailed account, which might be useful for some future comparisons with other Mediterranean communities on this point.

Another theoretical problem that had intrigued me at the time of my preparation for fieldwork, was the sexual division of religious labour.



The greatest handicap in the discussion of women in relation to religion is the novelty of this topic and the consequent lack of adequate comparative material. The major aim of my fieldwork was to collect detailed information on the relation of gender roles and religion, and then to consider what light that material could shed on some of the theoretical hypotheses advanced in anthropological literature.

At the time I was working on my research proposal, I was attracted by the hypothesis that associated the sexual division of religious labour with the sexual division of secular labour, and especially with women's role in reproduction and their role of responsibility for the welfare of the members of their household (Hochsmith and Spring, 1978; Arnold, 1978; Christian, 1972; Paul, 1978; Fernea and Fernea, 1972; Bybee, 1978; Betteridge, 1980).

My fieldwork material, however, did not quite agree with such a hypothesis, without refuting its validity either. My data seemed to agree more with the initial assumption of a correspondence relation between the sexual division of religious labour and the sexual division of secular labour - a point that I tackle in my last chapter in this thesis.

Meanwhile, the literature on theoretical considerations of the sexual division of religious labour had also led me to pinpoint another problem. Davis (1984), rejecting an explanation of the sexual division of religious labour in reference to the sexual division of secular labour as simplistic, was suggesting instead an explanation in terms of the discrepancy between the high place women achieve in local religious practices, and the low place the doctrinal view of their spiritual nature allows. In my view, Davis was confusing the issue by comparing two

distinct religious realms: folk religious practices and Church theology. Christian (1972) also seemed to argue on similar lines. That led me to a realization of the importance of the distinction between the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition as an analytical tool. Otherwise, the result seemed to be the merging and confusion of distinct realms of religious practices and beliefs. I think the Great/Little Tradition distinction as an analytic tool proved most fruitful in the case of the community I studied, without which I would never have been able to achieve any articulation of my material.

The geographic area I chose for research was the Aegean islands. My interest in the Aegean area dates from earlier on, and I had already, as I have mentioned, engaged in a short fieldwork on the island of Lesbos during my BA course.

The choice of the Aegean islands has not been accidental. Rather, it has been triggered by a realization that the area presents a cultural unity distinct from the rest of Greece as well as from the picture sketched for the wider Mediterranean culture in anthropological literature. The ethnography of the Aegean islands (Bernard, 1968; Dubisch, 1972, 1974; Hoffman, 1971; Dionissopoulos-Mass, 1975; Currier, 1974; Casselberry and Valavanis, 1976; Capetanaki, 1980; Kenna, 1970, 1971, 1976; M. Stott, 1973, 1985; Vernier, 1977, 1984; Herzfeld, 1976, 1980a, 1980b, 1980c, 1982, 1983) has brought to light the idiosyncratic pattern of kinship affiliation, inheritance, residence, descent and moral values. One discerns that the phenomenon of a kinship organization different from what is usually reported for Mediterranean communities, may well correlate with differences in the structuring of the male-female relationship.

Phenomena such as the transmission of productive property to women, the reproduction of one patriline and one matriline of descent and inheritance in South Aegean islands, the transmission of houses to daughters and the matrilocal residence pattern, the strong kinship affiliation of maternally related females and men's alienation from their parental family at marriage (a point recently argued strongly by Dubisch at the Mitilini Symposium of 1985) cannot possibly relate to the type of male-female relationship reported for other parts of Greece (Campbell, 1964; Friedl, 1959; Du Boulay, 1974; Hirschon, 1976, 1978, 1983) or the Mediterranean more generally. Although anthropologists of the Aegean have captured these idiosyncratic variables of kinship organization, they have not proceeded to their systematic connection, and also have not consistently related them to gender roles. But, in my view, the most intriguing feature of Aegean culture is the distinctive organization and its correlation with the male-female relationship, research on which can offer a valuable contribution to comparative anthropological studies, especially in the area of gender studies.

My choice of the island of Fourni for fieldwork was influenced by yet another criterion. It seemed to me that the phenomenon of temporary male absenteeism frequently encountered in communities engaged in a maritime economy (i.e., temporary employment of men outside the community as sailors and fishermen) was a factor that might well contribute to the intrusion of women in many realms of social life which usually constitute areas of traditionally male activities (a situation pointed out by Bernard (1968) and Petronoti (1980)). For that reason, I was looking for a fishing village for the fieldwork. Fourni was the only case I came across where all the people work at sea (sailors and fishermen), whereas

in most other island communities part of the population is engaged in agricultural activities, i.e., they have a mixed economy.

Other considerations that influenced my choice of Fourni were the following:

1. It is a lively economy, with rapid demographic growth and minimal emigration, while in comparison the majority of Greek villages nowadays are under the strain of non-viable economy and high emigration flow, and are undergoing disintegration.
2. It is a relatively small and isolated community, endogamous, with almost no tourism and only limited contact with the outside world, at least until recently. In that sense, it conforms to a great extent to the criterion of a 'closed' society and accordingly of a traditional cultural system.

My fieldwork lasted ten months (August 1981-May 1982), but I have also paid several long visits during the following years. The first two weeks of fieldwork were a period of intense strain. First, as is usually the case with newcomers, my first contacts were marginal people who are not overtaken and wrapped up in family duties and social ties, and have plenty of free time to interest themselves in strangers. In that sense, my first days of fieldwork were intimidating and unproductive. At first I stayed in a so-called hotel. It was not until I settled down with a family and was established in two separate rooms on top of their house, but sharing their meals, that a breakthrough into Fourni society was achieved, mainly through my landlady's help. I was already getting acquainted with a couple of families, but the intrusion into the community would have taken me a long time if it were not for my landlady's kindness and most energetic involvement in my work. She

undertook the role of manager, introduced me to several households on her own initiative, and urged the people to accept me.

The people of Fourni are constantly raising a barrier between themselves and visiting strangers, trying to keep the strangers outside the community. Instead of exhibiting the qualities of openness, friendliness and hospitality on which other Greeks pride themselves, they avoid strangers and keep them at a distance. The only visitors they welcome are the families of descendants of emigrants, that is, people who, although they may never have lived in the community, are related to it by kinship ties. Complete strangers are viewed with distrust.

As they recently explained to me, they do not want strangers as they do not know what kind of people they are and of what origins ('where their cap comes from' - απο που κραταει η σκουφια τους). The main fear behind their objection to strangers relates to matters of honour and shame. As they say, they cannot admit strangers into their household as they cannot possibly predict whether they will behave properly (that is, according to the Fourni rules of interaction between the sexes) towards the members of their family of the opposite sex. Also they say, 'The village may start talking', that is, other people may start wondering and gossiping about the kind of relation the family members and the stranger have. The villagers' attitude stems from their own great preoccupation with sex and their belief that any contact between a male and a female who are not related by close kinship ties can have no reason or content other than of a sexual nature. As they say, 'What have a man and women, who are not kin, to talk about?', and accordingly they assume that their interaction has a sexual purpose.

Fourni people's attitude of avoidance towards strangers is a sign of the 'closed' nature of this community. Through persistently ignoring and avoiding visiting strangers, they resist and reject the intrusion of unknown factors into their established way of life.'

I believe that my own intrusion into their society would have been dealt with similarly and would therefore have proved quite difficult, if the circumstances had been different. The circumstances that weighed favourably in my case were, first of all that, having not only a theoretical understanding but more importantly a personal sensitivity in the Honour and Shame code (perhaps one of the advantages of being both an anthropology student and a Greek), I took special care of my dress, behaviour and general appearance so as to conform to the villagers' prototype of 'a modest and serious woman'. This precaution proved necessary and successful. The villagers have later told me that they accepted me and liked me exactly for that reason. Especially after our long acquaintance, I think that they consider me a paragon of virtue and therefore warmly welcome me in their houses. When I first went, I was accompanied by a male friend who was presented as my husband (who actually left after a fortnight and never again visited the island), and I was wearing a ring for the purposes of fieldwork. My introduction as a married woman also played an important role (it minimized the threat of sexual involvements on my part), but it was mostly my attitude towards men (a matter-of-fact, 'not-wanting', almost solemn behaviour in my interaction with them) that pacified any apprehension on the part of the villagers as to the nature of my intentions while living amongst them - after all, in this society, married status in itself is not an obstacle to engaging in sexual affairs and there is a very high percentage of adultery.

The other most significant circumstance that favoured my acceptance by the community was the special liking my landlady took for me. This again was influenced by my modest and non-frivolous behaviour. She more or less looked upon me as her protégée and endeavoured to provide me with unlimited help (even emotional and practical help as she even undertook my entertainment and feeding too). Every day, she would introduce me into two or three new households, and in that way I became acquainted with most of the villagers very soon. Her presence in those visits was catalytic to the reluctance the Fourni people show in receiving strangers into their houses. My status was not anymore that of a complete stranger, but a quality in between a stranger and a community member. I was an accepted and approved stranger. My landlady took an even greater step by conferring on me a kinship status. She was translating her acknowledgement of me as her protégée into the community idiom by calling me a daughter.

I owe a great debt to my landlady, without whom my fieldwork might have been quite arduous and jeopardized by the Fourni villagers' closed attitude towards strangers. Apart from her help in breaking through the community's barriers, she also proved an exceptionally sensitive, reliable, astute and straightforward informant. She did not resent discussing even the most delicate and sensitive subjects. It was mainly through her (at least at the beginning) that I got information on topics that are kept secret from outsiders because of their disreputable character, such as past cases of adultery, children born out of wedlock, incest, and infanticide.

My landlady's name is 'Yramata' but she is known by the nickname 'Bouboulina' (the name of a female hero of the Greek 1821 revolution

against the Ottoman Occupation, who was the leader of a naval force). She worked for twenty years with her husband on a cargo boat in between Fourni and neighbouring islands. She engaged in heavy male jobs, such as carrying on her shoulders heavy loads of powdered cement, pebbles, sand, iron bars, etc. She would steer the boat most of the time, and she controlled the capital for the trade (most of the time the boat carried merchandise to be sold in Fourni) and the family budget. She was a hard bargainer in trade, and she managed through hard work and strict economizing to raise her family from extreme poverty to increasing prosperity. Her husband was also an astute merchant, but was rather fond of women and drink and 'open-handed' with money. The villagers admit that it was his wife who led him, by guiding and controlling his bad habits, along the way to financial success. She prides herself that when she took him (that is, married him), he was a child without even a pair of trousers of his own, and she turned him into a man - a prosperous man (οταν τον πηρα ηταν παιδακι και δεν ειχε ουτε σωβρακο να φορεσει και τον εκανα ανθρωπο). However, Yramata is not very well liked in the community of Fourni. She is hard in her trading dealings, aggressive, abusive, sharp-tongued, quarrelsome, antagonistic and ambitious, and in her single-minded struggle for prosperity has earned the dislike of several of her co-villagers. Still, although they resent her attitude, at the same time they acknowledge her forcefulness. I have heard them say that 'She is equal to ten men' (κανει για δεκα αντρες), 'If you get in trouble with her, you stand to lose' that 'You cannot manage her' (δεν την κανεις καλα), that 'You cannot cheat her' (να την γελασεις). Many people, both men and women, prefer to restrain themselves rather than confront her openly.



An example of her forcefulness and initiative was the time when a child was gravely ill and his mother begged her to transport him to the nearby island of Ikaria where there is a hospital. The weather was extremely rough, and the port authorities had forbidden the sailing of boats. Her husband was sitting at the coffee-house. Yramata started the boat and took mother and child to Ikaria. She helped them ashore, and immediately started back because the port authorities on Ikaria had been alerted and were waiting to prevent her sailing back to Fourni. The return trip was more dangerous than the outgoing one, because she would have the wind against her this time. In a last effort, the port authorities fired at her as she was sailing out of the harbour to scare her and make her return to shore. But she was not deterred, and successfully steered the boat back to Fourni. Her courage was highly praised by the villagers, who admit that very few of them would have the daring for similar acts.

The method I followed for collecting material was participant-observation. The size of the community permitted the employment of such a method. At first, I had to pose some direct questions as the people wanted to know what sort of information I needed. At that point I restricted myself to inquiring into matter-of-fact subjects, such as the kinship relations and family history of a household, the property transmission, employment, domestic activities, marriage arrangements, etc. Yramata, when escorting me, would prompt the people to tell me 'stories of the past', and that is how I came to hear a large variety of neraid stories, ghost stories, dreams of a religious nature, miracles, stories of miraculous icons that transmit heavenly messages, instances of vows, cases of the evil eye and so on - briefly, the major part of the material I have collected on religion and magical practices.

Later on, as the people got accustomed to my visits, they did not expect me to keep on asking questions. They thought my visits were of a social nature thereafter. Actually, they never did really understand what I was doing and were not really interested either. So they tended to forget the reason I was living among them. They had already accepted me and liked me, especially because I was so attentive to whatever they chose to talk about. So, the relationship established between me and the villagers, and thereupon the techniques of my research, were placed on a new footing. From that point onwards, my method was participant-observation in its true form. I was coming and going among various households, free to watch and listen to whatever was going on and the kind of things they were interested in and talked about. I was providing for them a sympathetic listener to whom they could pour out all their troubles and problems. Moreover, I was not an interested party and they could speak freely. In that way, I came to understand to a great extent the way these people thought, the way they felt towards each other, the things they cared for and valued, their criteria for moral judgment, their conceptualization of life and their interests, the things that made them happy and the things that worried them, their fears and their hopes. I was watching the community from the inside, seeing things as they saw them, without the risk of imposing my own preconceived ideas on their answers by posing direct questions. And that was most valuable in my study of gender roles and the code of Honour and Shame.

I believe that through my long acquaintance with Fourni people I have reached a fair degree of understanding of their way of thinking and their conceptual models. I cannot judge how much of that becomes evident in this thesis. After all, the revelation of a community's

social structure can only be the work of a lifetime. A thesis is too restricted for such a purpose. Or, I should say, it is only the beginning.

In this thesis I have kept to my initial research topics, i.e., the women's involvement in the economy, kinship and domestic organization, Honour and Shame, and religion. A topic I had not foreseen, but which was forced upon me by the data, is magic. Magic as a research topic has not figured in Greek anthropological literature (with the exception of Blum and Blum, 1965, 1970), and I had not grasped until the time of my fieldwork what a significant part of Greek culture it is.

In the thesis, I present my material in the following pattern. In the first chapter, the Introduction, I attempt a general description of the community, and specifically such aspects of social organization that have not been central issues of the research, but a picture of which is necessary for the understanding of this society as a whole and of those issues that are the focus of the study. I discuss in brief, without entering into details or analysis, the historical background of Fourni and its political involvement, the sphere of the economy, and the pattern of social stratification.

In the second chapter, which has the title 'Men and Women', I consider first the role of women in the economy and the constraints imposed on their involvement in it by their role in the sphere of reproduction. Then I examine the kinship structure: kinship relations, inheritance of property, the residence pattern, the matrifocal organization of kinship, marriage and the relations created in it (affinal relations, the husband-wife relationship, parent-child relations) under the constraints of a matrifocal kinship structure. Then, I discuss the

domestic organization and its matrifocal character and the implications of that for male-female power dynamics within the domestic domain. Finally, I tackle the ideological aspects of gender roles, the way men view women and vice versa, the antagonism inherent in the relationship of the two sexes and its conceptualization, as well as family ideology and the determination of people's orientation in, and conceptualization of, life in terms of their family membership. A last brief section of this chapter is devoted to women's participation in areas of social life beyond the boundaries of the domestic domain. Mediterranean anthropology has distinguished between the domestic domain as the primary area of female activities and the public domain as the primary area of male activities. The material from Fourni presents a society in which women are by no means confined within the domestic domain. Instead, female activities extend in other areas of the social organization, especially in relations that aim at social reproduction.

The third chapter has the title 'Honour and Shame'. I start with a discussion of the sociolinguistics of Honour and Shame in the Fourni society. Then I present material that shows the cultural emphasis this community places on sex and the conceptualization of male and female sexual nature. I follow up with situations where the Honour and Shame code is violated and the conceptualization of adultery on the symbolic level in the stories of nerais. I discuss gossip as the focus of the mechanisms of reproduction of the moral code. I then consider the pattern of sex segregation in the community, and I conclude with a summary of the particular manifestation of the idiom of Honour and Shame in Fourni and a comparative discussion.

The fourth chapter has the title, 'Religion: The Great Tradition'. After discussing the way in which the analytical distinction between the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition may be employed in an understanding of Greek Orthodox Christian religion, I describe the universalistic features of Orthodox Christian religion encountered in the Fourni community in a re-elaborated form which has absorbed elements of the folk tradition too. Finally, I discuss the sexual division of religious labour within this religious realm.

In the fifth chapter, 'Religion: The Little Tradition', I present the characteristics of the Fourni Little Tradition: devotional places, way of communication between the divine and the human, the dramatic field of dreams, miracles, apparitions and icons endowed with miraculous powers. Then I discuss the symbolic structure of the Little Tradition. There follows a section on malevolent supernatural forces (evil spirits and ghosts) which are part of the Little Tradition. And finally, I discuss in summary the relationship between the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition in Fourni.

The sixth chapter, 'Magical Beliefs, Practices and Rites', includes material on four areas of magical beliefs and practices: the magico-medical field, magic aiming at the protection of the household, the Evil Eye, and the rites of passage. The discussion of these fields of magic does not proceed into detail and analysis. Rather it is employed as a map of Fourni magical beliefs, practices and rites for the purpose of considering female involvement in the social realm, which is done in the last section of this chapter.

The seventh and final chapter has the title, 'The Position and Role of Women in Social Organization and in the Symbolic Systems in

Fourni'. In this chapter, I sum up and discuss the sexual division of secular labour and the sexual division of labour in symbolic systems, and suggest that the second reflects upon the first. Accordingly, my conclusion upon women's position in Fourni is that the nature and extent of their involvement in symbolic systems is an extension of their involvement in social organization, social cohesion, and social reproduction.

The whole material from Fourni is most intriguing as it points out the falsity of the idea of cultural unity in Greece. This thesis shows to a greater extent and in more detail than other studies of the Aegean area those aspects of social organization (especially in what concerns gender roles) in which the Aegean islands differ from other geographical areas of Greece. What is most important is that Fourni is not an individual case, an exception, but it seems that similar features as concern women's position characterize the whole of the Aegean area. Research on the idiosyncratic culture of the area can prove most useful in future comparative discussions and the formulation of hypotheses on topics such as gender roles, Honour and Shame, kinship organization, and women's role in symbolic systems.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### a) Geographical Location

Fourni is a conglomerate of small rocky islands in the eastern Aegean Sea of Greece. It consists of three large islands (Fourni, Thimena, St. Minas) and nine smaller ones. It has an area of 44.3 square kilometres, and is situated between the island of Samos and the island of Ikaria. The census of 1981 showed a population of 1,300.

Fourni is very arid and bare. Its surface is covered by rocky hills, bare of trees and with only a poor bush vegetation. The ground consists of limestones and schists. In the absence of natural water springs, the inhabitants are dependent exclusively on winter rains for the accumulation of the necessary household supply of water and the cultivation of their vegetable gardens. But the rate of rainfall is low, and Fourni has always suffered from inadequate water supply for all purposes.

The sea surrounds the steep bare slopes of the hilly interior, and has corroded the rocky soil, creating numerous small caves. Some people say that Fourni owes its name (which means 'ovens' in Greek) to that picture of endless small caves all around its coast.

The island is also called 'Korsei' (Κορσεϊ). The inhabitants attribute that name to the presence of pirates on it in the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Historical records reveal, however, that the island was called by that name in the days of Ancient Greece, as the writings of the historian Strabo (Στράβων) reveal.

The village of Fourni is situated on a small natural gulf at the southwest of the island. The houses are crowded together in a small

semi-circular flat basin which is surrounded by hills. Some people again say that it is to that oven-like picture that the village and the island owe their name. There are two other villages on the island: Chrysomilia (Χρυσομηλία) and Thimena (Θυμώνα), with about 200 inhabitants each. The village of Fourni has about 900 inhabitants.

Fourni is approximately ten hours from Athens. Communication with the capital is not direct: one has to take a boat from Piraeus to the island of Ikaria, and there get in a small sailboat (a caique) which takes passengers for Fourni over to the island. The reason why Fourni is not on the main boat line is that it does not have a port. The sea crossing between Ikaria and Fourni is one of the roughest parts of the Aegean, and is very rarely calm, even in summertime. It takes about an hour, or an hour-and-a-half, depending on the size of the small boats that take turns in serving that line. The villagers themselves consider it a strenuous trip, because the women and children always get seasick, and things get really difficult when they start vomiting in the tiny, and usually overcrowded cabin just when nobody can keep their balance any more as the boat struggles with the waves, while suitcases, handbags, merchandise and crates containing fish fall around. On one occasion, I crossed that sea in a really small caique in a Force 7 gale. As soon as we came out into the open sea and the boat started butting against the waves, a woman burst into hysterics and crumpled under the passengers' bench shouting to the captain to turn back to the village, causing panic among the rest of the female passengers.

Another route to the island is via Samos. There is an airport in Samos and the flight from Athens thence takes about an hour. After that, one has to take a bus to another town some two-and-a-half hours'



distance, and then catch the local small boat (a caique) to Fourni, which means another three hours of sea travel. The villagers, though, very rarely follow that route, because the connections are not reliable and there is a boat to Samos only twice a week. Still, they often go to Samos independently, to shop or to see a doctor.

b) The History of Fourni and Local Politics

Fourni is a relatively 'new' society, in the sense that it has a very short history. It must have been established some time around 1850. There are no written records, apart from the community census book (which however dates only as far back as 1878), and hence we have to rely entirely on oral tradition.

At the north of the island there is a small natural gulf called Kamari. As the boat gets near the shore, one can see through the waters what looks like the ruins of a sunken village. Perhaps the island was populated at some point in the past and an earthquake caused a sinking of the ground, which would also explain why the island rises out of the sea in steep hill slopes. Anyway, there has never been any interest on the part of the Greek Archaeological Department in the sunken village at Kamari, and there is no evidence as to how far back it dates.

At a site called St. George's, there stand the ruins of what is said to have been Cyclopean walls. In Crysomilia, there are still the foundations of an ancient temple. Today, the cemetery of the church of the Holy Trinity stands on these foundations. Similar foundations of an ancient temple exist on a site called Skalofono. At the outskirts of the village of Fourni, a sarcophagus of the Hellenistic Age has been excavated. Again, archaeologists have taken no interest in any of these findings, and hence there are no exact data on them.

As I said, Fourni is a 'new' settlement, established some time around the middle of the last century. We find many stories relating to its origins and to the first inhabitants and the circumstances of their settling on Fourni. Like all stories relating to the establishment of a new community, they have derived from the desire to account for, explain and justify the growth of this community, and they have been constructed on a moulding together of factual data, mythical elements and heroical exaggerations.

Oral tradition relates that the island of Fourni was used as a hiding place for pirates and fugitives from law during the 400 years of the Ottoman Occupation (1435-1821). The morphology of the coast, with the numerous small gulfs and caves, seems indeed ideal for that purpose.

According to one of the legends, there was, amongst others, a woman who had rebelled against the Ottomans, was outlawed, created a pirate fleet under her own command, and is said to have used Fourni as her base camp.

Another legend relates that Turkish thieves would kidnap rich Greeks and hold them prisoner in Fourni caves until they received the ransoms.

An Englishman called Roberts reported in 1694 that he had been kept captive by pirates who used Fourni as their hiding place. Further evidence of the presence of pirates in that area in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is provided by N.A. Kefaliniathis in his book, Pirates in the Aegean (N.A. Κεφαλληνιαδης, Πειρατεία-Κουρσάροι στο Αιγαίο). The famous pirate, 'Colonel' Ramanos Manetas, is thought to have been active in the Dar-Bougaz (Νταρ-Μπουγαζ), which used to be the name for the sea passage between Samos and Ikaria.

Oral tradition relates that the first inhabitant of Fourni was a shepherd from the nearby island of Patmos. He used to bring his herd to graze on the island of Fourni during the summer months.

At the time of the Greek revolution (1821) against the Ottoman Occupation, a Turkish fleet happened to pass by one day. Greek revolutionary boats were following behind it. The shepherd indicated to the Turks a narrow sea passage that cuts across the island. The legend has it that the Turkish commander was looking at that moment in the direction of the location where the village of Chrysomilia was to be built later on. In that way, the legend accounts for the name of the village as meaning 'the golden utterance' (Χρυσή μιλία). The Turkish fleet passed through the narrow sea passage indicated by the shepherd and escaped the pursuing Greek boats. In compensation, they say, the Sultan offered the island to the shepherd as a gift. The first inhabitants of Fourni had to pay a land rent to the shepherd, who in his turn paid a portion of it to the Sultan.

There is a myth, the myth of the snake, which relates to the period prior to the settling of the village and the visits of that shepherd in summertime. The myth says that the now bare island used to be rich in all kinds of vegetation; so completely covered by trees and bushes that, they say, it was like a jungle. Hence men from the nearby island of Ikaria would come to Fourni every summer and engage in charcoal production. One summer, on return to their camp in the evenings, they found their food supplies gradually decreasing. One of the men decided to stay in the camp one day to find out who was taking the food. At about noon time, an extraordinarily big snake, with seven horns on its head, appeared and headed for the food. The man was petrified at the sight of such a gigantic snake, and the creature grabbed him in its mouth. The man

was holding his arms outstretched (in such a way that his body took on the form of a cross, as the villagers comment) and the snake could not swallow him. His companions, seeing what was going on, shouted out to him to put his arms down, in the belief that the snake could not possibly eat him but would throw him out. However, the snake actually ate the man. After that, his companions lit a fire in order to kill the monster, and thus the vegetation on the entire island was completely burnt. In that way the myth accounts for the bareness of the island now. It goes on to say that as the snake was burning and dying, it uttered such a loud moaning that it was heard as far away as the neighbouring island of Ikaria.

Another legend relates that at the time of the arrival of the first settlers, there was a monastery on the island. The monks cultivated the land around and their monastery was quite prosperous. The new settlers were mostly shepherds and would let their flocks graze freely and destroy the monastery's fields. The fights between the monks and the new settlers ended with the latter climbing on a hill behind the monastery and throwing stones to kill the monks. The monks finally departed, but left a curse on the villagers: they took off their shoes, shook them off and said, 'Let no one die on his bread in this village' (Ε'αυτο το χωριο, να μην πεθανει κανεις στο ψωμι του), which means that no one should live the full life-span he was destined to live. There still exist some old ruins at a location called Koumara, and they are said to be the ruins of that monastery. Possibly this legend also reflects a conflict between agriculture and animal husbandry at some point in the history of this community. The actual data on the past village economy show that at the

beginning of the community, a portion of the inhabitants were engaged in agriculture while another portion was living on animal husbandry (apparently, the first settlers each brought the tradition of their origin). Agriculture finally proved unsuccessful due to the rocky ground and the aridness of the island. Animal husbandry did not fare much better either (since the bare hills were not suitable for grazing), but it was probably a more viable economic activity.

The exact date and circumstances of the formation of the village of Fourni are not known. The only documents which exist are the Community Council's records of births and deaths. The oldest date of birth in these records is the year 1878, but oral genealogical memory goes further back.

Many people claim to know the correct genealogy for their own lineage,\* who the founder of every lineage has been and where he came from. Such memory reaches a depth of seven generations in the case of the oldest lineage of the community.

Many households keep genealogical records: the dates of family births and deaths are written at the back of the house icons.

Oral genealogical memory matches accurately the Community Council's records as far as 1878. But further back different lineages' memories give conflicting evidence. For example, in tracing back genealogies, one is faced by the paradox that the first inhabitant of the village (acknowledged as such by all my informants) can be placed around 1850,

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\* Although the community does not consist of lineages but kindreds, I employ the term 'lineage' here, because the villagers trace genealogies on the male line only; that is, they trace genealogy in accordance to the transmission of surnames which go from father to son.

while the founder of another lineage is placed around 1830 (evidence by the descendants of this lineage).

Accordingly, it is hard to reach any definite conclusions as to the exact date of the establishment of the first settlers. We have more precise information for the years 1860-1870 onwards, which seems to be the time that Fourni took the form of a community. Until then, it seems that only a few families inhabited the island, lacking in social cohesion as members of a village. Between 1860 and 1880, there must have been a wave of new settlers who added up to complete the number of kindreds that constitute the community today. A few more settlers joined them at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The inhabitants of Fourni originated from all different parts of Greece: some came from the Aegean islands, others came from peninsular Greece. Some of them adopted as a surname the name of their place of origin: for example, Amoryianos (Αμοργιανός) after the island Amorgos, Kypreos (Κυπραίος) after Cyprus, Smirneos (Σμυρναίος) after Smyrna of Asia Minor, Lemnios (Λήμνιος) after the island Lemnos, and Kastritis (Καστριτής) after a village name meaning 'castle'.

The first inhabitants of Fourni are said to have been fugitives from the law; some of them for their revolutionary activism (at the time Greece was still under Ottoman occupation), and some of them for criminal offences. Again, there is no specific data as to that. The founder of a certain lineage is said to have murdered a man in his island of origin, Patmos, in a fight over a woman. The founder of another lineage is said to have been a famous and ruthless bandit who stole from the wealthy and distributed his trophies to the poor, but is also said to have murdered his godson for no obvious reason. His descendants

relate with mixed feelings of awe and admiration a large repertoire of his criminal activities, to which they add a rich flavour of heroic exaggerations.

Many of the descendants of the first inhabitants changed their surnames at the second or third generation. Some argue that the reason for the change was that the lineage had developed to such an extent that the use of a single surname for so many people caused confusion. Other people again argue that the change of the surnames was an effort on the part of the descendants to dissociate from their grandfathers' criminal reputation.

Whatever the truth may be as to the first settlers, their descendants strive for a peaceful and law-abiding life. Up to today they are characterized by a strong avoidance of political activism and their strict commitment to personal and family interests. They faced the Ottoman, and later the Italian (1940) Occupations with patient endurance. And while the neighbouring islands have a history of resistance and heroic tradition, the people of Fourni chose to lead their life in isolation and apathy for any affair beyond the boundaries of their island.

In around 1890-1900, the villagers started a court action claiming possession of the island. Until then, they had had to pay a land rent to the shepherd who owned the island, as a gift from the Sultan for having helped the Ottoman fleet escape from the Greek rebels. The land rent they paid (παχτωμα) was one-third of their produce. The villagers argued that it was not right that the island should belong to one man, the shepherd. The Sultan is said to have paid the shepherd the value of the island in money and to have assumed ownership himself. Thereafter the villagers had to give the Sultan only one-tenth of their produce as a tax.

Peninsular Greece and the Cyclades had been liberated since 1830. For 82 years, Fourni was on the frontiers of the new Greek state and the Ottoman Empire. That explains its suitability for the establishment of people who were fugitives from justice, as well as the stories about pirates and rebels using it as a hiding place during that period.

Then in 1912, two Greek brothers from Asia Minor (perhaps from Aivalik, or perhaps from Koufonisia) stopped on the island of Fourni. They got drunk and killed the four or five Turks who were supervising the island. Soon afterwards, Fourni was incorporated into the rest of liberated Greece.

World War I seems to have passed quite unnoticed by the villagers of Fourni. Apparently, nobody bothered with this tiny and insignificant island at that time.

In the Asia Minor Disaster of 1922, volunteers from all over Greece gathered in Fourni in order to pass from there over to Turkey and fight for revenge.

During World War II, an Italian platoon was stationed in Fourni. The villagers accepted the Italian occupation without any resistance, and went on with their everyday activities the same as before. In the neighbouring islands of Ikaria and Samos, the Italians, and later the Germans, were faced with strong resistance and a considerable number of guerrillas. Actually, Fourni must be one of the very rare instances (if not the only one) where a Greek village demonstrated complete apathy during that war.

After the end of World War II, the Greek government chose Fourni as one of the locations where they stationed 170 of the so-called 'exiles'. These were people who had participated in the Greek Resistance and were



convicted for left-wing affiliations. There was no camp made for these 'exiles', and they were distributed among the village households under the supervision of the local police. The villagers accepted these prisoners in the same disinterested and apathetic spirit in which they had endured occupation and World War II.

Fourni, Ikaria and Samos, constitute the County of Samos. The voters of these three islands together elect one member of Parliament. Vathi (Βαθυ) in Samos is the capital of the County of Samos. It is the headquarters of the State Authorities for all three islands constituting the County of Samos. The Fourni Community Council, the church, the primary school and high school, and the police station (consisting of two policemen), derive their jurisdiction from the Vathi headquarters.

In the 1981 national elections, the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Party (PASOK) came to power. It was the first time since World War II that the right wing had been defeated. Still, the County of Samos continued to elect a right-wing MP. The votes in the County of Samos gave 41.41 per cent to the right-wing party, 33.64 per cent to PASOK, and 21.02 per cent to the Greek Communist Party. Meanwhile, in the 1981 elections, Fourni supported PASOK with 429 votes, the Communist Party with 237 votes, and the right wing with only 227 votes.

Government politics are a major theme in heated arguments among men in the coffeehouse. Women also feel strongly about government politics and argue vehemently in the streets with other men and women. Political differences have traditionally divided the villagers in two halves: the left-wing supporters and the right-wing supporters. Since the emergence of the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Party (1974) and its electoral victory (1981), the villagers are divided into three parts instead.

Accordingly, they tend to support each other in business to a great extent on the basis of political affiliation, e.g., a left-wing family will choose left-wing builders to construct their house, or a right-wing family will favour shopping from right-wing shopowners.

Still, although one discerns a strong tendency for political affiliations to be taken into account in transactions and interaction, political differences are not taken to the extreme in Fourni life. Other more important factors, such as kinship, friendship, obligation of some kind and personal profit, undercut this general trend.

Hence, there are families where differing political affiliations among its members have often led to fierce quarrels (mainly during election periods), but I have not come upon any instance of sustained ill feelings among kin or in-laws solely on political grounds. Similarly, although people favour friendship with people of similar political beliefs, factors such as labour co-operation, business profit, neighbouring residence and mutual benefit of some kind also make for friendship among people of differing political views.

I would argue that government politics emerge as a major factor that disrupts everyday village cohesion and divides the villagers into hostile groups according to their political affiliations, mainly on the occasion of national elections. For the rest of the time, political empathies and hostilities more or less subside.

I believe that the reason lies in the fact that government politics do not really affect the villagers' life in any obvious or direct way (which might stimulate their political feelings on a more daily basis). The fishermen are free, licensed businessmen and the men employed as sailors enjoy quite high salaries that fully satisfy them. There is no local problem of unemployment.

Life on the island is simple - needs and expenses are few: for example, the absence of transportation expenses, restaurant and recreational centres, the restricted market in consumer goods, the local network of reciprocal exchange of fish, vegetables and services of some kind (for instance, the indirect payment for a knitted jumper by a supply of olives from the local olive harvest), the keeping of goats and chickens by a great number of households, home ownership, the lack of special educational opportunities for the children in music, dance, foreign languages, etc. - all this makes for lower daily expenses. In that way rising prices and inflation do not affect the village much.

As for international politics, the Fourni villagers do not consider them their concern, and basically ignore them.

The Greek state seems to have forgotten this isolated island ever since its foundation. Fourni participates by vote in the general elections, is accorded the right of appeal to state courts of law (which, however, is never used), and depends on the state machinery for welfare policies. Still, although in form the community of Fourni has the rights and obligations associated with the subjection to and dependence on a centralized administration, in essence it has led its own community life and organization in isolation, seclusion and considerable independence accordingly. Most probably this situation has been a result of the small size of the island, its distance from major transportation routes and consequent geographical isolation.

Electricity came to Fourni as late as 1972. The water supply system is still inadequate and problematic, and there is no drainage system. There is one resident doctor (appointed by the national health system), one nurse and one trained midwife, in an elementary surgery lacking

medicines and first-aid equipment. There has been a primary school since around 1925. A high school of three grades was introduced in 1979 and two more grades were added in 1985, though there are not enough teachers for all the courses. There is a post office and a police station with two officers. Communication with Athens (via Ikaria) is twice a week in wintertime, and then only if the weather allows the sailing of the sailboats that take passengers to Ikaria where the line-boat stops.

Otherwise, the Fourni people have had to build up their own community life by their own means and devices, on their own norms and ideas, with almost complete independence from the centralized administration of the Greek state.

But in Fourni there is also another kind of politics: their local politics that concern problems of the community and the election of a community council.

The Community Council local politics and state politics often diverge in their scope, and consequently the results of the Community election are not always in agreement with the national elections' results. In voting for a president for the Community Council, the villagers form coalitions which are left aside on the occasion of national elections.

From 1950 to 1967 (the date of the military coup of the Greek junta), the Community Council elections and the national elections gave the same results. In both cases, there was a majority of votes for the left-wing coalition EAA.

But from 1974, and the fall of the junta, to 1978, there is a discrepancy. In the national elections the majority of the villagers voted for the right wing. But for the Community Council elections, the

communists and the PASOK supporters formed a coalition against the right wing, won the elections and elected a communist president. The same happened in both the 1974 and 1978 elections (elections for a Community Council president take place every four years, irrespective of any speeding up of the national elections' periods). But in 1982, the supporters of PASOK, who had the majority in the 1981 national elections, did not form a coalition with the communists, and won the Community Council elections on their own by a margin of four votes (though there had been a scandal as the rest of the villagers argued that it was rigged). Now the rumours go that in the next Community elections, the right wing and the left wing will form a coalition in order to prevent the PASOK party from winning the post of Community Council president once more.

The Community Council does not represent political power within the Fourni society. Its functions are negotiatory (i.e., requests for state support and finance of public welfare services, the appointment of doctors, the construction of schools, roads, a harbour, etc.) and bureaucratic (records of birth, baptisms, weddings, deaths; ownership of land and animal stocks, issuing of certificates). The roles of the president and the members of the Community Council are not roles of political power, but rather ones of prestige.

c) The Economy

Some of the first inhabitants of Fourni were shepherds and some were agriculturalists. They rented land from the shepherd who owned the island (one-third of their produce). Later, when they succeeded in getting the island under the direct ownership of the Sultan, they paid him a tax which amounted to one-tenth of their production.

It must have been around the years 1892-3 that the village passed from the ownership of the shepherd to direct control by the Sultan. There is a document (called 'Mana', which means mother) with records of a land distribution in those years. In 1892, the land distribution act divided the land around the village into 128 portions - a fact that implies the existence of 128 households on Fourni at the time.

In 1893, an additional land distribution act divided the land in three other locations (Kamari, Kabi and Chrysomilia) in 120 portions. This document fixed that the four locations in which land was distributed by the 1892 and 1893 land distribution act, would be taken in pairs for alternate use for cultivation and grazing. One of the pairs would be used for cultivation one year and for grazing the next year, while the other pair would be used for grazing one year and for cultivation the next year, i.e., for the purpose of lying fallow.

In 1902, the villagers decided to distribute the land anew. Some kindreds had expanded much more than others and had no available land for the new households. There is a written document on the 1902 land distribution, stating explicitly that the new arrangements took care that every household possessed land.

In 1912, when Fourni was freed from the Ottoman Occupation and attached to Greece, the villagers rushed to appropriate the free bits of land that had remained, without a new land distribution act but ad hoc.

Land for cultivation and grazing was redistributed in 1928 and again in 1936, on criteria of kindred size, though many villagers complain that the more powerful families managed to be favoured with larger and better sites.

When first settling on the island, the villagers lived in huts. The small Turkish garrison did not allow them to build houses. The first stone house was built in 1879 and belonged to the Community Council president of the time (δημογεροντας), who was the man who would take the harvest taxes to the Sultan every year. in his own small row-boat. In 1912, when the Turks left the island, there existed only a few stone houses. The villagers rushed to appropriate building sites within the village area ad hoc and build small stone houses (many of which still exist, and some of which are also inhabited). That hazardous, at-will appropriation of building sites has not been questioned or changed ever since.

From the beginnings of the village until World War II, the main economic activities were small-scale cultivation and animal husbandry. According to my informants, the majority of the inhabitants engaged in the production of fava beans, barley, grapes and olive oil, while a minority owned flocks of sheep and goats. At the same time, almost every household kept a small vegetable garden, a couple of goats and a few chickens for its own consumption needs. Some villagers owned small row-boats and used to go fishing with a line on Sundays in order to supplement their families' food. Their wives occasionally joined them to gather wild vegetables or sea urchins and limpets at a nearby shore.

There have never been any cows raised on the island. Occasionally, a few people would decide to keep one or two pigs. A few more people occasionally bred a few rabbits. Mules have been used for transportation, but there have never been more than a couple in the village. Donkeys and horses were never brought to Fourni. There is a myth relating to horses, a myth offering a justification for the absence of this animal from the

island. According to this myth, horses cannot survive in Fourni because of the legendary horse of St. John, which is wandering around the location called St. John, and which comes along and kills any horse brought to Fourni. The existence of St. John's horse at St. John's location is a mythical element, and the villagers, when asked, acknowledge it as such. They realize it is only a myth; as they themselves put it, 'It's an old saying explaining why horses have never lived on our island'.

The main cultivation was fava beans, barley, olive trees, grapes, vegetables and a few fruit trees. Fava beans, barley and sometimes small quantities of olive oil too were traded with the neighbouring islands. Grapes were exported to Egypt until around 1920, when a vine pest (phylloxera) destroyed their cultivations.

The nature of the island did not favour agriculture though. There are no flat pieces of land and the villagers had to cultivate narrow terraces on the hills. In addition, they were faced with a rocky soil, a lack of natural water springs and streams, and low rainfall. The bareness of the hills rendered animal husbandry equally unprofitable. The labour return from both those economic activities was indeed minimal and the villagers lived in extreme poverty, although men, women and children worked hard all day long struggling for survival.

Their production was always small, and thus their exchange power minimal. They could barely satisfy their basic needs in food and clothing at a time when the neighbouring islands, though not wealthy, could amply satisfy such basic needs. The villagers of Fourni continued to weave their own clothes and walk barefoot up to the end of World War II. The poorest families even hardly managed to provide a meal for their members every day.



From these early days, the villagers of Fourni realized that their island could not afford them and turned to look for employment outside it. Actually, up to our days, the community of Fourni has survived (and is recently prospering) on economic activities that take its inhabitants away from the island boundaries.

However, the villagers never chose to abandon their settlement and emigrate to a richer land or the urban centres, in contrast to the overwhelming majority of other Greek rural people of poor country origin who have emigrated elsewhere, leaving behind them deserted villages with only the old to live there anymore. The people of Fourni chose the solution of seasonal migration: first in charcoal production, later in fishing expeditions and other employment connected with the sea.

As a result, the community, instead of exhibiting a declining population ratio like so many other Aegean islands which suffered from poor natural resources, developed and its population increased. While the village sprang out of about seventeen original male settlers (as the kindreds' surnames and the Community Council records reveal), in the 1981 census it presented a population of 1,300.

As I said, the villagers soon realized that their island lacked in natural resources and, with great insight, turned to seasonal migration as a solution.

Until the Asia Minor Disaster in 1922, men used to go to the Turkish coast and work in charcoal production for about six months (from April to October). Just before leaving for Fourni, they would sow small wheat plots, and on their return there in the next spring they would collect the harvest.

Some women would go to the neighbouring islands of Ikaria and Samos and work as paid labour in the olive harvest during the winter months.

Some time around the years 1925-30, the president of the Community Council at the time persuaded the villagers to cut down trees on the island and produce charcoal which he then traded to Piraeus and the neighbouring islands. They say that soon afterwards the island was left completely bare, and this economic activity came to an end.

But several men would go to various places all over Greece, still engaging in charcoal production in the spring and summer months. A few villagers persisted in this type of seasonal migration up until the last two decades.

In between the years 1910-40, there was a large wave of migration to the United States. The married men would forward to their wives in Fourni part of their earnings. Many of the emigrants, especially the young and single, remained in the USA for life. A few of the married male emigrants also settled there, leaving their wives and children behind them. There are also a few cases of married couples moving to the USA together. But similarly, a great number of the emigrants returned to the village of origin after a few years of hard work.

Some of these emigrants, on return to Fourni, brought along their savings from their short time of hard work. The value of these savings was quite big by village standards, and the emigrants invested them in starting some business (stores, coffeehouses and fishing boats). Some of them used their capital recklessly. There is the story of a coffee-shop owner who drank so much that he would leave the wine barrels' taps on all night; and there is also the story of the grocer who crossed out poor people's debts after a while. But some of them prospered.

Today there is a considerable number of descendants of the emigrants to the USA in the period 1910-40. My estimates from my informants are for over fifty families, living there permanently and coming to Fourni only for occasional summer visits.

After World War II emigration to the USA was rare. Sometimes we have individual cases of people who decided to join some distant relatives in the United States and settle there.

The inhabitants of Fourni had tried fishing as an alternative way of making a living ever since the beginning of the twentieth century. But they lacked the technology and equipment necessary to make it profitable. A small row-boat with one or two fishing-nets, in a sea area that is beaten by strong winds and rough weather even in the summer months, could barely secure an income sufficient for the needs of the large families (five to ten children) most villagers had in those days.

Still, the villagers had realized that although the land of Fourni lacked natural resources, the surrounding sea was really promising given the appropriate technology and know-how. After World War II, they were quick to grasp the newly arising opportunities for a profitable exploitation of the sea. Circumstances had matured in various ways:

1. There was capital available for investment. Several of the emigrants to the USA returned to their village of origin after the end of the war, bringing with them the savings of years of hard work. Other villagers took advantage of a new type of employment that had opened up for them after the war - they left for a couple of years on the high seas with commercial marine companies in order to accumulate an initial small capital.
2. The Greek state offered bank loans for the development of the fishing industry.

3. Developments in technology offered the opportunity for large-scale fishing enterprises, hence rendering fishing much more productive and profitable. The introduction of power boats, and up-to-date boats and fishing equipment, as well as the introduction of modern fishing techniques, changed the nature of fishing radically.

Fishing on a large scale started in the decade 1950-60. At first it was only a few daring villagers who realized that, given the new circumstances, fishing could become a profitable enterprise. Then, little by little, as fishing by the new means proved a success, others followed. They abandoned their small row-boats, asked for bank loans and invested in a variety of craft and fishing techniques. And soon, this shift in the economy paid off: fish were plentiful and fishermen started making good money.

Today, about half the male population of Fourni engages in fishing. Fourni can be said to be the number one fishing village in Greece (i.e., the ratio of fishing employment to its population and size). It produces an annual average of 2,500 tons of fish, leaving aside the great quantities of small fish considered uneconomic (because of its low market price), some of which is consumed locally and some of which is thrown back into the sea. The major part of the catch is shipped to Piraeus and only a minor part consumed locally.

There are 273 boats of all sizes on the island, with modern equipment and employing a variety of fishing techniques. There are fourteen fishing teams, called 'gri-gri' (γρι-γρι), which employ the technique of purse seine with light lamps on the skiff. There are eight trawlers and twenty-one large gill-net boats. There are 200 smaller boats working long lines with hooks, gill nets, dynamite and other specialized techniques

specific to different kinds of fish. Finally, there are about thirty non-professional small boats, that is, boats owned by men employed elsewhere and engaging in fishing at only certain periods of the year; for example, men employed in cruise boats, who go fishing only during the few winter months they stay in the village.

The smaller boats are usually worked by one or two men, whilst the larger boats require a crew of around four to six. Crew recruitment is based on kinship relations. Most often it is a father and sons owning equal shares; but it may extend to involve sons-in-law, cousins and nephews when there are not enough brothers in a family. Sometimes, non-related villagers may be employed on a wage basis for a certain period of time, if extra hands are needed and cannot be recruited among close kinsmen.

The so-called 'gri-gri' boats are large teams consisting of a fishing boat, a storage-transportation boat, and a couple of small row-boats (the so-called 'dummies') that carry the lamps. These fishing teams are usually owned by brothers, but require a crew of about twenty men each. The Fourni people proved really ingenious on this point. Since the village was developing and prospering, it was difficult to get cheap labourers locally. At the same time, it was not profitable to pay high wages to such a large crew. In true business spirit, the owners of these large fishing teams turned for cheap labour beyond the boundaries of their own island. For over twenty years now, they have been employing Egyptians who fly over to Fourni for the working season (March to October) and are paid extremely low wages (about £160 a month), from which their air-fare is also deducted.

I said before that the villagers of Fourni, upon realizing the poor natural resources of their island, turned to seasonal migration in order

to secure a living. The development of large-scale fishing enterprises fits perfectly along these lines. Fishing (apart from the case of small row-boats) makes for a variation of seasonal emigration. The large boats do not fish around the island. They start on fishing expeditions that last from two to ten days; then they return to the village for a day or so and, depending on the weather, start all over again. As for the large fishing teams called 'gri-gri', they work away from the island for twenty-eight days, and come to Fourni only at full-moon every month, when the fish can see the nets and hide.

It may now seem as if fishermen are away from the village almost all the time. But it is not quite like that either. Fishing depends on the weather at sea. The fishermen may work almost non-stop for twenty days, and then be stuck on the island for another twenty days, due to bad weather. All in all, taking into account all the various fishing techniques and various size boats, it seems that the working days for fishermen add up to an average of six to eight months per year.

It is most impressive that Fourni has developed fishing to such an extent whilst lacking a harbour. The village is built on a natural gulf which is badly affected by the winds both in winter and summer. The boats are dispersed a little distance one from another within the gulf; they are moored on one side by their anchor and on the other to a buoy (which is a kind of especially strong anchor to which several boats can be moored). When the weather gets rough, the danger of the boats being beached is considerable. Many boat-owners go on board and start the engines. And many times people have to run in the middle of the night to help to save a boat from being swept ashore and breaking up.



During the winter months the area suffers from especially strong winds. The northwest wind (Προβερζα) lasts only a few hours, during which it reaches up to Force 10. This wind hits the Fourni harbour worst: the waves come ashore up to the front village houses. Not only the boats in the harbour, but even the boats lying ashore are also endangered, and the island is out of communication as no boat can go out or come in.

The southwest wind (Σοροκο-Λεβαντες) does not hit the harbour, but does cut off all communication. It may last up to fifteen days (sometimes even longer) and reaches up to Force 9. This wind hits the harbour of the island of Ikaria, and the line-boat from Piraeus cannot reach the port. Again, no boat can come to or leave Fourni.

The worst wind for the villagers is the north wind, which has a strength of Force 6-7, and may last up to a month. At its maximum, that is a strength of Force 7, it cuts off communication with the outside world, but that does not usually last for more than a few days. The reason the villagers regard it as the worst wind is that it occurs frequently during the winter months and prevents fishing and merchant-boats from working.

During the summer the area suffers from north winds, the so-called 'meltemia' (μελτεμια) which again keep fishing and merchant-boats from working, though it cuts communication for only a couple of days once in a while.

I should add at this point that the port authorities do not allow any boat to leave Fourni when the wind reaches Force 7. The sea passage between Fourni and Ikaria is very rough because of undersea currents, and the sea passage between Fourni and Samos is even worse.

Apart from the weather, fishing is also hampered by another factor. The waters in that part of the Aegean are the habitat of a large number of dolphins and seals. Both are said to cause great damage to fishing-nets. The so-called 'gri-gri' fishing teams suffer 40 per cent damage to their fishing nets because of dolphins and seals.

Around 1955, a new way of earning a living appealed to the inhabitants of Fourni. Again it was an economic activity involving seasonal migration. The economic development that followed World War II, amongst other enterprises, also promoted the Greek commercial marine overseas - cargo boats stationed at Piraeus, the port of Athens, and travelling around the world.

Those of the villagers who did not have the funds necessary for a fishing business and could not risk a loan, chose to work as overseas sailors instead. This meant that they were away for ten to twelve months when they would return to Fourni and spend a few months with their families. The majority of men employed in the commercial marine sent their monthly wages to their wives, who were charged with the responsibility of saving; some men (ten to fifteen) though, used to keep a part of their wages themselves and spent it at the ports where they came ashore.

In the 1960s, a new career started for the sailors. The expanding trend of tourism started a new business of large cruise boats in Greece. The younger generation of the villagers preferred employment as stewards and waiters on these cruise boats, considering it more prestigious. Also, these sea trips last for only a week (the itinerary consisting of Greek islands, Turkey, Israel and Egypt); and they would then have a day off at Piraeus before the next journey.



Employment in the cruise boats is again seasonal, starting in April and coming to a halt in October. The young sailors return to Fourni to spend the winter until the next work season.

Apart from fishing and working as overseas sailors, the men of Fourni also engaged in a third way in the exploitation of the sea. In about 1960 they tried local commerce and sea transport. Two couples (husbands and wives) started in competition on a small scale. They would transport goods, people and animals anywhere for a small charge. It soon proved a worthwhile enterprise.

Today there are four boats that make the Ikaria-Fourni and Samos-Fourni routes on alternate days. They are called 'the post boats'. Four more boats engage in commercial transportation to and from the neighbouring islands of Patmos, Lipso, Chios, Samos, Ikaria, and sometimes also Paros and Naxos. Lastly, there are two large metal boats: one, which started in 1982, takes a cargo of 700 tons, and the other, which started in 1984, a cargo of 950 tons. They travel between Piraeus, Ikaria, Fourni, Patmos and Lipso carrying cargoes ranging from edible goods for stores, to building materials. Coincidentally, one boat-owner happens to be one of the two men who had started the sea transport business in 1960.

Fishing on a large scale as it developed around 1960 and employment in the high-seas marine and cruise boats, proved very profitable options. Today Fourni is probably the most quickly developing village in the Aegean Sea.

From 1965 onwards, this formerly extremely poor island has enjoyed increasing prosperity. After a very long time of hard struggle, the

villagers have finally discovered the way to economic development and are consequently enjoying steadily rising living standards. Their farsightedness in seeking employment outside the limited boundaries of their barren island, and the daring business spirit they exhibited in investing in expensive fishing enterprises, have paid off.

And when economic prosperity came along, they proved themselves cautious and enterprising. Instead of plunging into consumption and luxury goods, they practised saving, and then turned to investing. Their first step was to buy a flat or a building site in Piraeus or Athens, and the following step was to build houses for their daughters on the island.

The last ten years have been characterized by an economic boom in the local building industry. The village has just about tripled in size, with modern houses springing up constantly among the old ones. The builders are suddenly profiting on a large scale, and recently they even founded a union for the further promotion of their interests.

Most of the people who are middle-aged today did not alter their life-style much. They allowed themselves the facilities of an inside toilet, a marble sink for washing clothes, a few house repairs of the floor and roof, some decent clothes and linen, and a few essential extra kitchen utensils. Meanwhile, they gradually increased their bank balance 'for an hour of need', as they used to say. And then they turned towards providing for the next generation: their daughters' 'trousseaux', village houses and/or flats in Athens for their dowry, and later on a better education for the children.

It is only the young people in our days who, more certain of economic security than their parents, went in for luxuries and higher

living standards. The new houses are fully furnished, including a sitting-room and a dining-room that older houses do not have, modern bathrooms and the latest modern electrical equipment. Young women spend substantial amounts of money on fashionable clothes and cosmetics. Children enjoy the privilege of a full lower-school education, and most of them are encouraged to go on the high school. Young people try to display their prosperity in every possible way; every young family's ideal is to prove the best-dressed, the most fashionable, the best-equipped in house facilities, furniture and electrical appliances. Economic competition on that plane has reached its maximum. Development and prosperity are now established facts.

Briefly reviewing the village economy today, we would say that roughly half the male population is engaged in fishing and about half is engaged in high-seas commercial marine enterprises and cruise boats. There are only four shepherds owning small flocks of sheep and goats, while nobody lives on agriculture any more. A few people work in the building industry and a few are shopowners and coffeehouse proprietors. Three families engage in apiculture as an additional occupation, producing about 20 tons of honey per year altogether.

Many villagers own olive groves from which they collect part, if not all of their annual olive oil and olives supply. Women keep a goat each - for milk and the Easter lamb, a ceremonial dish - and a few of them still cultivate vegetable gardens for family consumption, and occasionally sell the surplus. Almost every household keeps a few chickens for its supply of eggs, and once in a while the meal of a fresh - that is, not deep-frozen - chicken.

It is obvious that the village economy has changed radically since World War II. From a poor cultivating and shepherding community, Fourni turned into a fishing and marine society. And it is on that switch that today's economic prosperity is based.

Today Fourni counts fourteen general stores (which sell mostly foodstuffs, but also some clothes, glassware and children's toys), two bakers, two greengrocers, three butchers, two fishmongers, two shoe stores, three hairdressers, one dry cleaner, one clothes shop, one glassware store, one embroidery and knitting-wool shop, one electrical repair store, one machine repair store, six coffeehouses, two restaurants, three small inns, one ice-producing store (for fishermen), one small orange drinks one-man factory, and a one-man sand-producing quarry.

There are also the post office building, the surgery, the primary school and the high school, and the Community Council office.

The most significant and astonishing aspect of Fourni's economic development is that it has not relied on any state government help. It has been generated by the community itself independently.

The Greek government seems to have completely ignored this isolated island, as I have already mentioned. Electricity was introduced as late as 1972. Apart from the bank loans issued for the development of the fishing industry (which was a nation-wide measure and not specific to Fourni), the government has not taken any steps to promote the economic development of the island. Only in 1981 did it promise - probably only to support the election campaign of the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Party - the construction of a harbour which the island needs badly. They have brought along a few cement blocks, but construction has not actually begun as yet.

But even more significant and astonishing than the sheer fact of the recent economic prosperity in Fourni, is the way in which it was attained. The villagers did not look for an easy way out, although suffering extreme poverty. They fought against emigration as well as against the easy solution of relying on tourist development. Most Aegean islands - especially the smaller ones - have chosen tourism as their main, if not only, source of income. But Fourni never paid much attention to tourism, and even today tourists often have to leave the island soon because of the absence of modern accommodation facilities and full-time restaurants.

The fact that the economic development of Fourni was so great, while due solely to the people's individual efforts and struggle, goes to show, in my opinion, that this amalgamation of inhabitants of various origins had decided to put down roots in Fourni. At the same time, it goes to show that they were determined, daring and ingenious people. They started from scratch, and all on their own they succeeded in creating within less than a century a densely populated and prospering community. And the greatest witness to this is that the majority of the young people of today openly state their preference for living in Fourni rather than going to urban centres, which can be said of very few other villages in Greece.

d) Social Stratification

Fourni is not a class society. Land distribution has always been more or less equal and there have never been any big landowners employing other villagers, or individuals not owning any land. Fishing as a mode of production does not involve the conditions necessary for the formation

of a class system. It does not involve appropriation of surplus labour and consequent economic relations of exploitation. As for the men working in high-seas cargo and cruise boats, they are wage-earners in the employment of big Greek shipowners, and therefore the economic conditions of their employment do not affect the community structure.

In fishing, men own their means of production (the boat and fishing equipment), but they do not own their primary means of production, the sea itself. The sea cannot be divided, allocated or owned, as land and animal stocks are. It consists of unlimited ground that anyone can exploit given the necessary fishing equipment. Economic differentiation among fishermen relates to differentiation in the ownership of this fishing equipment (larger boats and larger nets promoting more intensive and extensive fishing techniques), and not in the ownership of their primary means of production.

Fishing does produce surplus product, but this does not necessarily derive from the exploitation of surplus labour (which is the case of the few large 'gri-gri' fishing teams that recruit Egyptian labourers). Surplus product can also be the result of more intensive and extensive fishing techniques, as happens in the other cases in Fourni.

In addition, fishing is subject to a major restraining factor: the unpredictability of the labour return. It is not a mode of exploitation with a constant labour return; rather, its labour return is hazardous. A fishing team may work unsuccessfully for several days, and then catch a very large quantity of fish in one night.

Although we cannot speak of class divisions in Fourni, there have always been differences between households in terms of prosperity and social status. There always were the more well-to-do villagers,

enjoying higher prestige; and at the other extreme of the continuum there have always been the especially poor people, belonging to the lower social ranks in terms of social prestige. Such differences in wealth and social status have been the result of differing opportunities and differing motivation, in association with a risk-taking spirit, cunning, and the taking advantage of trading opportunities.

Looking historically at the Fourni society, we can single out a few more prominent and prosperous households at different time periods. We can also single out the factors that contributed to these people's more favourable position.

Up to the beginning of the twentieth century, the new settlers, having mostly come to Fourni as refugees either from the law or from personal enemies, did not possess any property and were poor. There were only two exceptions. One was a rich merchant who, according to my informants, had owned a large transportation boat before settling on Fourni, and started raising large flocks after his establishment on the island. They say that the reason he came to live in Fourni was to hide from his powerful father-in-law because he had eloped with this man's daughter against his will. The wife was an 'educated' woman (she had finished primary school), and taught the Fourni children how to read and write. The family was the most prominent, wealthy and prestigious one in those times, and its fame has survived to our day.

The second exception was the man who was president of the community (δημογεροντας) during the Ottoman Occupation, and transported the annual harvest taxes to the Sultan in his own small row-boat. That man, exploiting his power as president, appropriated a larger portion of fields during the land distribution acts of 1892 and 1893. Also, in

his position as an intermediary between the villagers and the Ottoman occupiers, he received many gifts in exchange for granting favours. His nickname was 'Pleon' (Πλεον), which means surplus, and indicates his prosperous and prestigious position in the community.

In the period 1900 to 1940, there were two categories of people who succeeded financially. The first category includes people who emigrated to the USA, saved money, then returned to Fourni and invested all their savings. The most prominent figure in this category was a man who, on his return from the USA, invested his capital in starting the first shop - for groceries and household goods - in Fourni, and soon greatly augmented his initial outlay. Another case was a brother and sister. On returning to the village, the brother invested his savings in opening the second general store in Fourni. The sister, who was childless, gave her savings to another one of her brothers in Fourni, and he used it to buy the first 'gri-gri' fishing boat which employed twelve Egyptians and prospered until it was inherited by his son, who went bankrupt after World War II.

The second category of people who succeeded financially comprised those who realized the high profits involved in trade. One man started acting as an in-between fishmonger: he would buy the production of Fourni small-scale fishermen and sell it to fishmongers in Piraeus. Then, saving his profits from this trade and taking out a bank loan, he started a 'gri-gri' fishing boat. He became one of the wealthier men in Fourni right after World War II, but finally went bankrupt through his passion for gambling.

Another man started business as a merchant of charcoal. He induced his co-villagers to engage in charcoal production in Fourni, and he sold



their production to Piraeus and the neighbouring islands. He also bought the cheese production of the Fourni shepherds at very low prices and resold it to other islands and to Piraeus. During World War II, he engaged in 'black market' activities, importing food to Fourni and exporting Fourni products, such as fava beans, cheese and goat meat. He started a general store, and his descendants are still prosperous shopkeepers to the present day. His two grandsons own a bakery, a butcher's shop, a big grocery and general store, and a considerable amount of real estate both in Fourni and in Piraeus.

Another man succeeded financially by introducing the first large merchant boat to Fourni (about 20m long) and undertaking all cargo transportations to and from Fourni before World War II. It proved a most successful enterprise, and his family became the most prosperous and prestigious until the outbreak of the war. Later they lost all their money through the father's long-lasting illness, and a lazy son who succeeded him after his death.

From all these men who prospered before World War II, in only one case has the affluence continued in the next generation. For the rest of the cases, as I have said, it all ended up in bankruptcy, either during the men's lifetimes or in the next generation.

After the war, new families emerged as prosperous and prestigious. We can distinguish three categories according to the different ways in which they acquired their wealth.

One category is the big fishing team - the 'gri-gri' - owners. These fishing units started with large bank loans. Three of them proved successful, and their owners (two or three brothers in each case), after paying off their annual instalments to the bank, make enough profits to invest in real estate in Fourni and Piraeus.

The second category consists of some of the shopowners. I have already mentioned the descendants of one of the first shopkeepers in Fourni. There are two more shopkeepers who, thanks to the location of their stores, have prospered and have invested their profits in real estate.

The third category concerns the two men, each of whom invested in a large metal boat (one of about 700 tons, the other about 950 tons) that engage in cargo transportation from Piraeus to Fourni and a few neighbouring islands.

There are three salient points about the foregoing that need further discussion. The first point concerns the time period divisions I have made. I set the beginning of the twentieth century as the start of a distinct period, because it was at about that time that Fourni was freed from the Ottoman Occupation, and the inhabitants looked for new ways to economic development and prosperity. Some emigrated to the USA, some engaged in seasonal migration to other parts of Greece and Asia Minor, some turned to trade, and some initiated small-scale fishing.

Then I set World War II as the start of a distinct period. This again is the mark of the beginning of a new economic era for the community. After the war there was noticeable economic development all over Greece, and in Fourni it was distinguished mainly by the introduction of new technology - large boats with engines, modern fishing techniques, developing building construction methods and materials - as well as by the introduction of new jobs - the employment in high-seas commercial boats and cruise boats - and a boom in the fishing industry.

The second point for discussion concerns the constituents of social differentiation in this society. I have argued that in Fourni there are no social classes because of the absence of labour or surplus value

exploitation, but there have always been differences among households in terms of prosperity and social status. Then I proceeded to mention the people who created wealth in different time periods as the most prominent and prestigious people at their time. Clearly, I have singled out wealth as the distinctive feature responsible for social differentiation. What I would like to point out is that this has not been an arbitrary choice on my part. Rather, it reflects the way the villagers perceive social differentiation. In the absence of office jobs and offices, the primary status symbol in Fourni has always been material wealth.

The only offices in the community have traditionally been those of the priest and the Community Council president. The priest is of course a respected person in the village, though he does not enjoy any special prestige on account of his position. The Council president is also a respected person, but his election is the outcome of party politics, and the villagers more or less regard him as a man whose duty is to serve them rather than somebody with special privileges.

Office jobs have mostly been introduced quite recently, and the majority have been filled by non-villagers. Today the local people employed in office jobs include the post-master, the secretary (female) of the Community Council, and two primary school teachers (one man and one woman). It is true that the villagers acknowledge them as 'educated' people, and in that sense a cut above themselves, but in no way as prestigious as if they owned wealth. Fourni society respects and praises education, but definitely not above material affluence.

One might dare to say that long years of economic deprivation have led the villagers to place an excessive value on property and money. Wealth was, and still is, the means for and symbol of high social status.

Hence, in Fourni, it has always been the more affluent people who have enjoyed a higher social status, more prestige, and a higher degree of respect and admiration as well as envy by the community.

The third point I would like to discuss concerns the factors that have contributed to the economic success of certain individuals in this society. In summing up the data, it becomes obvious that there are three distinct patterns in which affluence was realized in this otherwise poor community.

The first pattern involves the accumulation of savings by emigrants to the USA and their investment in big business on returning to Fourni. The second pattern involves the exploitation of trading opportunities: the fish-dealer who concentrated the Fourni fish production in his own hands, and resold it to Piraeus merchants; the man who concentrated the production of charcoal and cheese in his own hands in order to sell the produce elsewhere. The third pattern involves a modern business spirit: risking a bank loan to invest in large-scale fishing or large transportation boats, constant re-investment of capital, and the willingness to undertake risks.

It is also obvious that traditionally the most profitable enterprise in Fourni has proved to be trading. This is only to be expected, of course, on an island that lacks natural resources. Only lately, with the introduction of modern fishing equipment, is it becoming apparent that the exploitation of maritime natural resources - that is, fishing - can also be highly profitable, especially on a large business scale.

Fourni society is characterized by high competition for wealth and social prestige. There does not exist a fixed social ranking of the village families. As I have said, the fluctuations in the economic

sphere have made certain families rise and then decline in terms of prosperity, while other families were rising to fall in their turn. The villagers describe this situation in the social differentiation system as 'the spinning of the wheel' (γυρτζελ ο τορχος).

The absence of fixity in the social ranking has allowed the individual to aspire and struggle to reach a leading position within the community in terms of prosperity and social prestige. Simultaneously, it has provided the ground for constant competitiveness and enmity among the households. All the (at times) better-off families have been concentrating all their energy and all their initiative towards one goal: proving themselves the best. Village life is dominated by this struggle to augment material wealth and show off prestige symbols, such as houses, furniture, clothing, gifts, and extravagant spending on fiestas.

The negative stereotyping of this competition is encapsulated in the attribution of the label 'fanciful' (φαντασμενος) to individuals or families who try to prove a rising status in the social ranking by claiming wealth and investing in prestige symbols.

The competition to acquire wealth and improve social ranking takes a most acute form in the sphere of inheritance. People quite often die intestate. They divide their property orally among their children at around the time of their marriages. Very few villagers write a will or transfer their property to their offspring by written documents before death. The reason is that they do not wish to make the distribution of their property final, and they also do not want to lose hold of it. The older people use their property ownership and their decision on its allotment as a weapon by which to ensure that they will be looked after

in their old age. The customary rule is that the daughter (or the female relative) who will undertake their care is entitled to a greater share of the parental property.

The result is that most villagers die without having come to a final decision on the distribution of their holdings. But even if they have expressed their wishes on the matter explicitly, with the lack of written documents their children start quarrelling after their death. Endless fights over the inheritance of land and housing property are the cause of marked hostility among siblings.

Heirs almost never resort to a court of law, probably because each party is determined to get a greater portion of the property than they are actually entitled to. Such disputes may remain unresolved for many years as each heir insists on his or her claim, and seems to prefer the claim of a greater portion to the appropriation of a smaller holding. There are today several instances in which siblings have died without having divided their parental inheritance. Their descendants, upon being questioned on the subject, reply with the stereotyped answer, 'It remains to be seen how it will be done' - a response that underlines the enmity among the heirs side by side with their hope for a larger gain.

In general, given the existence of private property, the Fourni community is characterized by the striving for prosperity. This trend is reflected on the socio-psychological plane in the emphatic individual competition, the exhibition of wealth symbols, the belief in luck and opportunities, and the passion for gambling - which is a combination of luck and competition. The actual cases of individual economic success which I have mentioned, support and motive this trend.

Still, these are not adequate prerequisites for the formation of class differentiation. Neither trade, nor fishing, nor employment outside the boundaries of the community involve the conditions necessary for the development of a class system.

CHAPTER TWO  
MEN AND WOMEN

a) The Role of Women in the Economy

The topic of this thesis is the relationship between the sexes and the conceptual aspects of gender roles in the community of Fourni. I am looking first into the material relations of men and women, the idiom of kinship, the organization and ideology of the domestic domain, and then into the idiom of Honour and Shame, the sphere of religion and the realm of magic.

The first thing to be looked at will be the role of women in the economy of the society, on the premise that a basic determinant of the position of social actors in any society is their participation in social relations within the sphere of material life. The theoretical framework of the analysis is based on the general assumption that what distinguishes women as social agents is the nature of their involvement in the processes of production and reproduction. My starting point will be the sexual division of labour, conceived as involving the differential participation of men and women in the separate but parallel structures of production and reproduction, either of which can be a determinant of the position of women in different types of societies, according to their historical and cultural specificities.

The second thing to examine in order to establish the male-female relationship in that society will be the idiom of kinship. Kinship pervades all aspects of social life in rural Greece. Kinship relations are the basic social relations on which the social organization at the village level is founded. The family (the nuclear family in the



overwhelming majority of Greek rural communities) constitutes the basic organizing structure. It is the articulative unit of the village organization and the unit of reproduction of the social division of labour.

Hence, the domestic domain, which consists of the nuclear family and its kinship network, is also of primary significance in the study of the community's social organization. Moreover, we cannot treat the domestic domain as an isolated unit. Because of the importance of kinship in the village social articulation in Greece, it would be a mistake to view the family as 'private' in the sense that the term is used for Western households by sociologists. The public and private aspects of family are closely interdependent and inseparable.

The study of the kinship system is, therefore, a necessary prerequisite to the examination of the relationship between the sexes in Greece. An analysis of the sexual division of labour without relating it to kinship would be inadequate and even misleading. The examination of the participation of women in the sphere of material production only cannot account for the differences in female status in different Greek communities.

During the first month of my fieldwork in Fourni, I was so greatly impressed by the women's social position, the extent of their activities and their aggressive behaviour both in domestic and public places, that I was tempted to give this paper the title 'A female society'.

For all over Greece and the Mediterranean in general, anthropologists have reported a varying scale of kinship and family structures of a fundamentally patriarchal bias, sex segregation between the domestic and the public domain, undermining of female authority even within the

domestic domain, even extreme cases of female seclusion. In general, the image of the Mediterranean woman has been reported as lacking in real power in both the public and the domestic domain (though in varying degrees in different cultural settings).

Anthropological research on the Aegean area has reported a social structure that favours women more than in the rest of the Mediterranean (Dubisch, 1972; Herzfeld, 1980; Kenna, 1970, 1971); Currier, 1974; Casselberry and Valavanis, 1976; Vernier, 1977, 1984; Capetanaki, 1980; Bernard, 1968; Petronoti, 1980; Hoffman, 1971, 1976). It reports an idiosyncratic pattern of inheritance, residence, kinship affiliation and moral values: the transmission of houses and significant land property to daughters, uxori-local or matrilo-cal residence, strong matrilo-cal affiliation, limited male authority within the domestic domain, mild manifestations of the idiom of Honour and Shame. Such features place the Aegean area on the one end of the continuum of Mediterranean societies in what concerns gender roles. It seems that women in the Aegean enjoy relatively more privileges than women in other Mediterranean societies.

Yet, expecting Fourni to be a more or less typical case of this Aegean phenomenon, I was taken by complete surprise. During the first week of my fieldwork, I had collected a number of notes on the gender roles that looked unbelievable to say the least. As the small mail-boat, in which I arrived, was docking, a woman grabbed the rope to fasten it on the pier. I found the male proprietor of the hotel (where I was staying at first) supervising the cooking of sweet fruits while his wife had gone shopping. The restaurant proprietor was constantly ordered about by his wife who, what is more, was most of the time

sitting on a chair. My prospective landlady bought me a coffee in a coffeehouse while making the arrangements for renting her house. I saw women coming to the coffeehouses in the evening to fetch their husbands, and then bully them all the way home. A middle-aged woman entered the coffeehouse, attacked some men playing cards in most insulting language, and made her married son stop gambling and return home. Another woman, passing in front of the coffeehouses dragging her goat by a rope, embarked on a heated argument on politics with some men sitting outside.

The very first impression of a visitor to Fourni is that this is a society more or less dominated by women. Still, this is not the point I am going to argue for. The situation is not as simple and straightforward as that. What I am going to argue for (and try to show by my data) is that women in Fourni enjoy a great deal of independence in many areas of social life, their multiple activities are not constrained solely within the domestic domain, they have a major role in maintaining and reinforcing social cohesion in a society where men are absent for long period of time, and play a definite part in matters that concern the community as a whole.

The case of Fourni is most interesting in what concerns the idiosyncratic gender relationship as this is an historically recent society. We do not encounter survivals of some past historical period distinct from the Mediterranean communities anthropologists have examined, in which case the evidence might be discarded as irrelevant to the discussion of the social constraints delimiting male-female relations in the Mediterranean today. On the contrary, the historical recency of the community of Fourni (the latter half of the last century)

offers a unique opportunity to investigate the optional combinations of structural factors in the determination of gender roles and the social position of women in a peasant society of our days within the so-called capitalist world.

I will start by looking into the position of women in Fourni society from an historical perspective (i.e., from the time of the first settlers), and consider the social constraints that affected their social position as it stands nowadays.

The first inhabitants of Fourni engaged in agricultural and herding economic activities up until World War II. However, the nature of the island did not favour such an economy. There were no valleys, fields or even small pieces of flat land - the villagers had to cultivate narrow terraces on the hills that cover the island. The soil is rocky, there are very few springs and streams, and rainfall is very low. The hills are almost bare of natural vegetation, and therefore unsuitable for animal husbandry.

The labour return from an agricultural and herding economy under these circumstances was minimal, and made for great poverty. In those times, men, women and older children alike laboured hard in a desperate struggle for survival on that barren, rocky island. What we have here is a form of a domestic mode of production in which both men and women participate in a relationship of unity.

Supplementary activities on a small scale were undertaken by both men and women to meet their family needs. Mainly the men, though sometimes aided by the women, tried fishing in the slack periods of their economic activities. Women cultivated vegetable gardens and kept goats and chickens for family consumption.

The labour teams were nuclear family teams, consisting of husband, wife and children. And, as the villagers explain, they all had to participate equally in all the tasks and all the stages of their economic activities in their effort to make a living.

What is really striking and most intriguing is that there was no division of labour between men and women, according to my informants. Women engaged in the very same activities as men: they worked the land together with a hoe; they both did the sowing; together they would dig the ground, get rid of the weeds, and water the crop; and finally they reaped the harvest together. Similarly, both men and women would take the flocks to graze and would milk the sheep and the cows, and make cheese.

I know that this lack of any task differentiation between the sexes both in agriculture and in animal husbandry sounds most astonishing. Still, all my informants (old people who were children at the time period concerned) insist that men and women did all the labour tasks jointly, without any discrimination as to gender. And their explanation, as I already mentioned, is that this was the only way to manage their cultivation or their animal care in order to ensure a living for their family.

We can discern the interplay of a number of social constraints that have allowed for this relatively unusual situation. The community of Fourni at the time of its establishment was characterized by a high level of segregation between families (a feature still persisting nowadays to a considerable extent) as the first settlers had different origins and were strangers to each other. The nuclear family developed into the primary corporate group in the new community, and as the economic unit in cultivation and animal husbandry.

At the same time, the limitation of the natural habitat (that is, the absence of large pieces of land that could allow large-scale agriculture or large-scale pastoralism) was a restraining factor in the development of social division of labour. Another constraint was the matrilateral bias in kinship relations and the absence of agnatic kin groups to form the basis of work teams. Some of the first settlers originated from communities of peninsular Greece where agnatic kin groups form labour teams. But on the one hand they faced the practical problem of having to wait for one generation - that is, until they had grownup sons; and on the other hand, the emerging community of Fourni opted for a different kinship system promoting matrilateral affiliation.

Meanwhile, the emerging sphere of economy necessitated intensive labour. As the nuclear family could not rely but on its own members, survival did not leave any other option but the simultaneous effort of both sexes in all the productive tasks.

Seasonal male migration has been a very significant factor also. Men would leave the island and seek employment (mainly in charcoal production) elsewhere to supplement the family income. During the months of their absence, their wives and unmarried children had to undertake all labour activities.

The social constraints I have mentioned, in combination with the economic constraints of a mode of production that necessitated the pooling of all available human labour to return merely a product for subsistence, have contributed to the promotion of production relations that lack a sexual division of labour. As this was a new community, starting from scratch, free from a uniting cultural tradition, and

facing a problem of survival, this was its only option given the social and economic constraints.

At the beginning of Fourni society, women toiled hard in the fields or herding flocks, as well as in the house. A very old woman, who related her life story to me, said that she would keep on working late in the night spinning, knitting and sewing to meet her family's needs in clothing. Then, she would get up before dawn to go and cut wood around the hills for the fire, to carry water from the village spring and, once a week, to wash the family clothes at the spring. During the day she would help her husband in his agricultural tasks, and look after her three goats, her chickens and her vegetable garden. In the afternoon, she would do the housework and the cooking for the next day.

Another old lady gave me the version of a woman's lot among the pastoralists in those days. From an early age she helped her father in grazing his flock. At the age of twenty she undertook, all on her own, the working of her father's mill. When she married a shepherd, she spent her days in the hills, helping her husband herd his flock. She would also help him in milking the ewes, shearing, and producing cheese. In the afternoon she did the housework, and in the evenings she knitted jumpers for sale.

Women in those days were overworked and did not have much spare time or any enjoyment. Poverty made their lives an endless struggle for survival. A female informant told me, 'Women worked like donkeys in these times'.

After World War II, the idea of alternative economic activities with more profitable chances was introduced. Fishing-boats from

other islands stop by during sea trips and provide information on the profitability of exploiting the sea by means of technologically advanced fishing equipment. At the same time, through the restricted but expanding trade contact with neighbouring islands, the villagers of Fourni hear about the chances of profitable employment in cargo-boats (and later on, cruise boats) of the merchant fleet stationed at Piraeus.

Within the following decade, the old economic activities are abandoned and a new economy is adopted. The new economy consists of the exploitation of the surrounding sea (fishing and local small merchant boats) and wage employment in overseas cargo-boats. It is an economy that restricts economic activities to men and excludes women from the sphere of production. Just like previous forms of seasonal migration for economic purposes (charcoal production and cultivation of fields in Asia Minor), this new form of seasonal migration is incompatible with female activities and responsibilities in the domestic domain, and especially the female role in the sphere of reproduction.

Still, in Fourni even this structural constraint did not make for the complete exclusion of the female population from the new economy - though it did so for the overwhelming majority. There was no question of female employment in overseas cargo-boats as they would not accept women. But the exploitation of the sea nearby the island of Fourni was another matter. It did not depend on legal formalities; it involved only the structural constraint that female roles in the sphere of reproduction impose on their freedom of movement. A few women who were past the stage of reproductive activities and could make arrangements for the care of their family and household by some other kinswomen in their absence, overcame this structural constraint,



and proceeded to engage in the economic activities pursued by their husbands. A few women joined their husbands in small-scale fishing, and two women engaged in full-time occupation next to their husbands in a joint venture in sea trade.

The rest of the female population was left out of the new economy. Still, there were no restraints on pursuing economic activities within the boundaries of the community. A number of women engaged in various forms of trade. Some would sell products imported from surrounding islands - oil from the island of Samos; oil, preserved sweet fruits, mastich and spirits from Chios; glassware, ornaments, perfumes and whisky from Patmos and Leros, and a variety of other such small items. This form of trade mostly circulates via the domestic domain, without the use of a store.

Other women either joined their husbands in shopkeeping, or established a shop on their own. When it is a joint enterprise of husband and wife, they participate equally in its organization, the supply of merchandise, and its running. Female shopowners often travel to Piraeus on their own to order and collect new stock. There is no male shopowner working on his own, but there are female shopowners working on their own.

Coffeehouses, the two restaurants and the two hotels are run by married couples. Serving is mainly a male task (though women do serve in the absence of their husband), while the preparation of drinks and food is undertaken by both husband and wife.

It is evident that the local trading and service sector has constituted an economic area where women have been quite active. Local trade especially seems to have been a prominently female enterprise.

Exclusively male economic activities within the village consist of the building industry, the two shoe repair stores, the machine repair shop, the electric repair shop, the sand quarry, and the driving of the two recently introduced lorries that carry heavy and bulky materials.

The figures on the extent of men's and women's involvement in local trade are as follows:

	<u>Married Couple</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
General stores	8	9	-
Bakeries	2	-	-
Greengrocers	2	-	-
Butchers	1	-	2
Fishmongers	2	1	-
Dry-cleaners	-	1	-
Trade without fixed establishment	-	14	-

The last entry - Trade without fixed establishment - refers to women who store certain types of goods in their own homes (e.g., oil from Samos, glassware from Patmos, clothes from Piraeus, etc.). There are, in addition, six women who sell locally produce from their own vegetable gardens, and goat's milk.

To sum up, after World War II, the old economy of agriculture and pastoralism is abandoned for the more profitable engagement in maritime activities. Men become almost exclusively (we have seen there have been a few exceptions of individual women) the economic agents in these activities. Women move from full participation in the old economy to exclusion from the new sphere of production. However, there are still areas of economic activity (mainly local trade) in which they engage. Actually, the data show that local trade is to a far greater extent a female, rather than male enterprise. The bulk of the female

population, however, is restricted to their domestic tasks. At the same time, they retained their traditional domestic economic activities which have always been independent of the dominant mode of production and aim at the satisfaction of basic family consumption needs: the cultivation of vegetable gardens, sometimes olive cultivation, the keeping of one goat and chickens, as well as gathering activities (wild vegetables and snails from the surrounding hills, and a variety of limpets from the seashore around the island). The latest generation, however, faced with the increasing economic prosperity achieved by the new male economic activities, is abandoning these traditional domestic enterprises too.

My theoretical viewpoint is that what is most significant upon examining the role of women in the economy of a society, is not simply the extent of their participation in the sphere of production but the nature of the economic relations in which they are involved.

The women have never, throughout the history of Fourni, been subject to relations of exploitation within the sphere of production. In the period of cultivation and animal husbandry, inheritance rules allocated productive property (land and animals) to all children irrespective of their sex. It seems, according to the data, that women inherited an equal part of the parental productive property. The economy of cultivation and animal husbandry was not favoured by the natural environment of the island and therefore the labour return was hardly sufficient to cover the basic family needs. The product was exchanged for other products essential for family survival (for example, an agricultural family would exchange part of its fava beans production for the products of a pastoralist family), and there is no evidence of any surplus product.

Up until World War II, the community of Fourni was based on an economy of cultivation and animal husbandry which not only did not involve any exploitation of female labour, but also did not seem to involve any significant differentiation between the sexes in the ownership of the means of production, and in the production, distribution and control of the products.

b) The Kinship Structure

The economic position of women in this mode of production (i.e., up to World War II) favoured the prevalence of a kinship structure that promotes a comparatively privileged female position. At the time of the establishment of the first settlers on the island of Fourni, two distinct cultural traditions were brought along. The one, carried by emigrants from peninsular Greece, involved a 'bias' (Callier-Boisvert's term, 1968) towards the patrilateral, virilocality, co-residence and strong affiliation between father and sons who may constitute a corporate property-owning group. The other, brought along by emigrants from the Aegean islands, involved a 'bias' towards the matrilateral, uxorilocality, close residence of mother and daughters, and female property-ownership.

These two cultural traditions (I will call them in abbreviation the Aegean cultural tradition and the peninsular cultural tradition) came into conflict within the new settlement until one of them prevailed as more compatible with the developing social structure of the emerging community.

The social selection between these two cultural traditions, differing in kinship structure and the male-female relationship, was not immediate

but a gradual process. Even then, the final prevalence of the Aegean cultural tradition did not immediately banish all influence of the Greek peninsular tradition. Rather, it seems as though these two traditions competed for a considerable length of time. Even in our days, the male-female relationship seems to involve an underlying ideological antagonism (I will discuss this point more extensively later on. My informants' reminiscences of the old days report cases of families where the husband was the master of the house, women were constrained within the domestic domain and their freedom of movement in the public domain (especially after dawn) was subject to male authorization. It seems that in the early days of the establishment of the Fourni community, the social position of women and gender roles did not have one specific pattern but rather reflected the variety of traditions and beliefs different first settlers brought along from their community of origin, and there was a great deal of conflict and antagonism in the relationship between the sexes and between and within families.

With the development of the new settlement into a cohesive community, there emerged structural factors that contributed to the prevalence of one of these cultural traditions and the gradual fading away of the other.

I believe that the major structural factors that promoted the final prevalence of the Aegean cultural tradition are the following:

1. The economic structure; R. Smith (1972) has singled out the absence of property and status differentiations as particularly conducive to the development of a matrifocal system.

2. The economic position of women.
3. The constraints on marriage alliance during the formation of the Fourni community: the original male settlers came from both peninsular communities and island communities, but very few of them brought a wife along. The majority sought a wife from the nearby islands. Accordingly, on the one hand we have a scarcity of women during the early period of the development of the community (a factor that heightens the value of women), and on the other hand, the overwhelming majority of the first female settlers were carriers of the Aegean cultural tradition.
4. Male seasonal migration, and,
5. To a lesser degree, the geographical position of the island, in the sense that the influences they may have received through communication with the outside world - however limited this was - were influences from the surrounding Aegean cultural tradition.

Hence, there finally established a kinship system with a matrilateral bias and favouring the women's position. Its essential characteristics are matrifocal kinship ties, the matrifocal structure of the family, the uxorilocal residence pattern, the rule of house inheritance by women, and the transmission of productive property to both sexes.

This kinship system remained the same up to the time of my research, with one exception. The change in the economy after World War II was accompanied by a change in the rules of inheritance of productive property. I will now describe the kinship system as it emerged at the beginning of the Fourni community, in which form it has persisted until nowadays, and I will discuss its change in what concerns the inheritance of productive property later on.

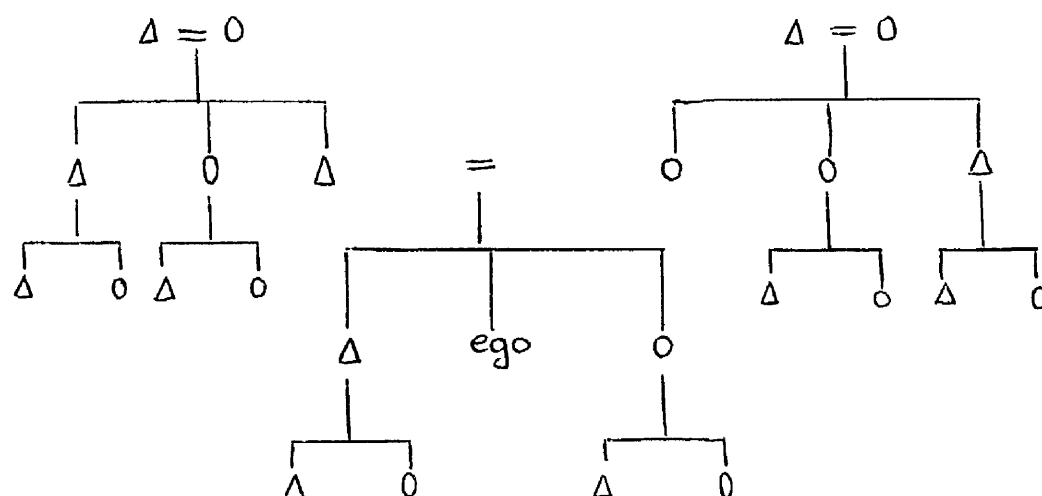
Kinship constitutes the fundamental network in social interaction. It is the basis of Fourni social organization. The ties among kin are the most essential social relations along which everyday life is patterned. The village looks as if it consists of dispersed households; actually, it consists of clusters of households, spatially dispersed, but connected by the strings of kinship in a relationship of interdependence. Descent is reckoned bilaterally, but in the articulation of solidary kinship groups, the emphasis is on matrilineal ties.

Consanguineal kinship is clearly differentiated from affinal relations. Kinship by affinity beyond parents-in-law and siblings-in-law is not held as true kinship. 'She is not really my own aunt; she is my husband's aunt', one often says. 'She is not of my own kindred.' Although affinal kinsmen beyond the spouse's parental nuclear family are reckoned as kinsmen, the relationship does not involve closeness and reciprocity. Husband and wife call their parents-in-law by the same term as their natural parents, i.e., 'mummy' and 'daddy' (μυμυ, μπαμπα). The relatives of one spouse address the relatives of the other spouse as 'in-law' (συμπεθερε), apart from the spouses' siblings who are always addressed by their names.

In consanguinity, the reckoning of kinship extends to cousins of second degree and grandparents' siblings. Still, a relationship of true involvement is acknowledged only as far as the relatives shown in the scheme below. If one looks into kinship ties minutely, one realizes the reason for this delimitation. If they were to count all kinship ties, they would result in an enormous number of relatives. Cutting down on the acknowledgement of kinship involvement is necessary

for the emergence of a distinct set of kin to be related by close interdependence and reciprocity to each ego.

Network of Kinsmen related by Close Reciprocity Relations



During the period of the economy of cultivation and animal husbandry, it seems that productive property was transmitted to both sons and daughters in equal shares. That means that daughters of cultivators received land for cultivation and daughters of pastoralists received flocks of sheep and goats. Vegetable gardens, which were principally a female concern and independent of the main economic engagement of a family in either cultivation or animal husbandry, were passed down from mother to daughter. The very same happened with chickens (every household kept five to ten chickens for family consumption). Olive orchards, which again were a secondary economic activity irrespective of whether a family was engaged in a cultivation economy or an economy of animal husbandry, were divided in equal shares between children



of both sexes. Shops were transferred preferably to sons, but if the sons were engaged in other economic activities, the shops were left to daughters.

We have here a pattern of bilateral inheritance and diverging devolution. Productive property (land, flocks, olive trees) are inherited from both parents and are distributed among offspring of both sexes, and, most significantly, without differentiation in the content of inheritance between the sexes. The rule of inheritance of shops favours male offspring, but does not altogether exclude female offspring. At the same time, there is also unilineal inheritance of secondary economic resources within the domestic domain, which supplement family consumption needs: vegetables gardens and chickens pass from mother to daughter.

Finally, there are inheritance rules with a unilineal bias in what concerns the transmission of houses and building plots. I am employing the term 'inheritance with a unilineal bias' because although the ideal inheritance rule states that houses are transmitted from mother to daughter, the actual situation is more complicated and does not adhere rigidly to this rule.

The ideal rule prescribes that the mother give her daughter the house she inherited from her own mother. But actually the housing property transmitted to children is usually larger than that inherited by their mother from her parental family. Property accumulation in Fourni is primarily directed to house-building. The property, hence, passed on to one's children is larger than the property the parents have inherited. Parents distribute their building property, mostly in equal shares, among all their daughters.

According to the economic circumstances of each family and number of daughters, various combinations in house transmission may arise: a second floor may be built for a daughter, the parental house may be divided into two halves, one of which is given to a daughter, a separate house may be built for a daughter, a building plot may be given to a daughter and the parents may help her husband to build on it. A family with many daughters may combine any of the above methods. There are also cases where the parents cannot provide all their daughters with a house, but they can always provide them all with a building plot, or part of one.

Therefore, one might say that daughters inherit house property from both parents and not only from their mother. However, this situation by no means undermines the rule of house inheritance from mother to daughter. For one thing, building plots and houses (whether transmitted by legal document or oral arrangement) belong to the daughter and not her husband, as is the prevailing custom in some other Greek communities. That means that during marriage as well as in the case of divorce, the inherited property stays with the woman and cannot be appropriated by her husband. For another thing, when the wife inherits a building plot and then her husband builds a house on it (either from his personal savings prior to marriage or from the joint income of the married couple), that house becomes the property of the wife. The local as well as the Greek state law dictates that all property standing upon a plot belongs to the owner of that plot. Hence the paradox that the father's financial contribution to the increase of house property does not undermine the rule of unilineal house transmission from mother to daughter.

The flaw in the ideal rule of unilineal house inheritance springs from another complication. A family that has no daughters, or a property of building plots and house property greatly exceeding the number of daughters, may well transmit such property to male offspring too. In this case, the sharing gives definite priority to daughters. House estate passes unquestionably to daughters (and only if there is house property in excess is it given to sons), while sons inherit a building.

This is why I talk of an inheritance rule of unilineal bias. Houses and buildings are ideally transmitted from mother to daughter, but there are instances where men also inherit such property. The deviation from the rule of unilineal inheritance becomes even more apparent in the second generation. A man may possess house or building property of his own, which he will then transmit to his daughters. Hence, although there is the rule of unilineal inheritance of houses and buildings, there are instances (and not too rare) where the rule is invalidated. Accordingly, we cannot talk of an absolute rule of unilineal inheritance but rather of an inheritance rule of unilineal bias.

When we consider the transmission of productive and other property as a whole, we see that inheritance rules favoured women more than men in the Fourni community up to World War II, or thereabouts. The situation afterwards changed, which is a point I will discuss later.

Land and house transmission is a matter for constant conflict among relatives. For one thing, building and especially housing property is never equally distributed. What is more, although daughters

receive a home to live in at marriage, the transmission is oral and thus in a sense inconclusive. Parents postpone the transfer of property titles by document for their old age and often change the inheritance arrangements during their lifetime. Dowry is not a thing settled once and for all, and parents may add to it any property they may accumulate after having married off all their children. Or, after having provided each daughter with a house, they may have left part of their land property to be distributed at a later stage. Or simply they may decide to redistribute their initial property. Quite frequently, there is a change in their initial decision in order to give a larger share to the daughter who undertakes their care in their old age.

In the majority of cases, parents show reluctance to come to some definite arrangement as to the distribution of their property and finally die intestate, leaving their offspring fighting over the property. The Fourniotes' high competition for property accumulation transcends kinship ties. Brothers and sisters get into fierce quarrels, each of them trying to maximize their share of the inheritance. When it comes to property rights they seem to forget their kinship relationship and become deadly enemies. There are several cases of siblings who are not on speaking terms because of such disputes. However, they never go so far as to employ real violence or to shoot each other, as is very frequently reported in newspapers for other parts of Greece.

The lack of documents transferring property titles and the endless fights over inheritance of buildings and houses has generated a most peculiar situation for several families. As far as houses are concerned, oral transmission has become de facto, but the sharing of buildings

that belonged to parents who died intestate is still debated for up to three generations. The result is that in a village with a high pressure on building plots (because of an expanding population in combination with scarcity of land), the younger generation cannot receive land property as long as such on-going disputes are unsettled.

c) Matrifocality

A major structural feature of kinship in Fourni is matrifocality. Kinship reckoning is bilateral, but the articulation of solidary kinship groups is based on the stress of matrilateral affiliation. I am employing the term matrifocality because the role of women in kinship groups so articulated, is far more active and significant than the term matrilateral affiliation implies. Matrifocality is manifested both in the family structure (and, by extension, also in the organization of the domestic domain) and in kinship affiliation.

The kinship structure consists of three articulated levels: the nuclear family, the matrifocal extended family, and the matrifocal kinship network.

The nuclear unit is the primary organizational unit in the community of Fourni. Up to the change of the community economy after World War II, it was the basic productive unit. It is characterized by marked sex role differentiation in parenthood: the father is responsible solely for providing financially for his children, while the mother undertakes all other responsibilities involved in parenthood (bringing up the children, their socialization and education, their medical care, their religious life, arrangements for the employment of boys

at an early age, marriage arrangements, provision of dowries and house property, financial support after marriage). The conjugal relationship is not characterized by solidarity but rather by antagonism and friction.

The matrifocal extended family consists of one male adult and one female, their unmarried offspring, their married daughters and the nuclear families of the latter. It is a tightly related cluster articulated on the basis of the solidary bond between mother and daughters throughout their lifetimes. The bond between mother and daughter is the strongest social bond in this community. It involves emotional support, the exchange of labour, material provision and ideological influence (the daughter being the receptive end in this flow).

The nuclear family is under a considerable extent of influence and interference by the matrifocal extended family. Actually, the nuclear family is part of the matrifocal extended family but also retains a certain degree of autonomy. This ambivalence in the status of the nuclear family arises from the ambivalent position of women. Women are at the same time members of the nuclear family they create by marriage as well as still members of their parental family. Matrifocality constantly undermines women's loyalty to their nuclear family, and consequently it undermines the autonomy of the nuclear family.

The uxorilocal residence pattern complicates the relationship between the nuclear family and the matrifocal extended family and makes it difficult to draw a clear boundary between the two. Uxorilocal residence reinforces the solidary bond between mother and daughters. Mother and daughter either share the same roof or live next to each

other. The parental house estate, expanded by additional constructions, is divided between married daughters, with the result of uxorilocal residential clusters. Even when circumstances do not allow the close residence of mother and daughter, matrifocality overcomes the obstacle of distance by constant visiting between the two houses.

Hence, the newly married couple comes to live next to the bride's mother, if not under the same roof. They spend most of the daytime in the mother's house, and go to their own only to sleep. They share their meals, spend the evening with the bride's family watching TV or chatting. And their offspring are brought up mainly by their maternal grandmother.

When one of her daughters marries, a woman is supposed to undertake the burden of domestic responsibilities of the new family, to guide and help her daughter in her new tasks. The bringing-up of the children is mostly in her hands. Since the daughter spends most of her daytime in her mother's home and most of the domestic work is undertaken by her mother, she has a great deal of spare time even during the years her children are still very young. The high degree to which she relies and depends on her mother curbs her autonomy in all matters. The mother has all the responsibilities and consequently supreme domestic authority, while her daughter remains only a minor. The constant intervention of the mother in all matters concerning her daughter's and her son-in-law's life often creates a lot of strain between the two spouses. The daughter will herself attain full adult status only when she, in her turn, becomes the head of a matrifocal domestic nucleus; that is, when her own daughter marries and brings her husband to live with her, which is usually a little before or after the age

of forty, since women marry early in this society. By that time, her own mother is reaching old age and, though she may still live with her daughter and her now married grand-daughter, loses the reins of domestic authority and fades into the background. A new matrifocal nucleus emerges.

The daughter-mother relation is the focus for a primary matrifocal nucleus as well as for a secondary matrifocal network. As we have said, the primary matrifocal nucleus consists of an extended family which includes a mother and a father, married daughters and their nuclear families, and any unmarried sons and daughters. This primary matrifocal nucleus usually constitutes a residential unit too.

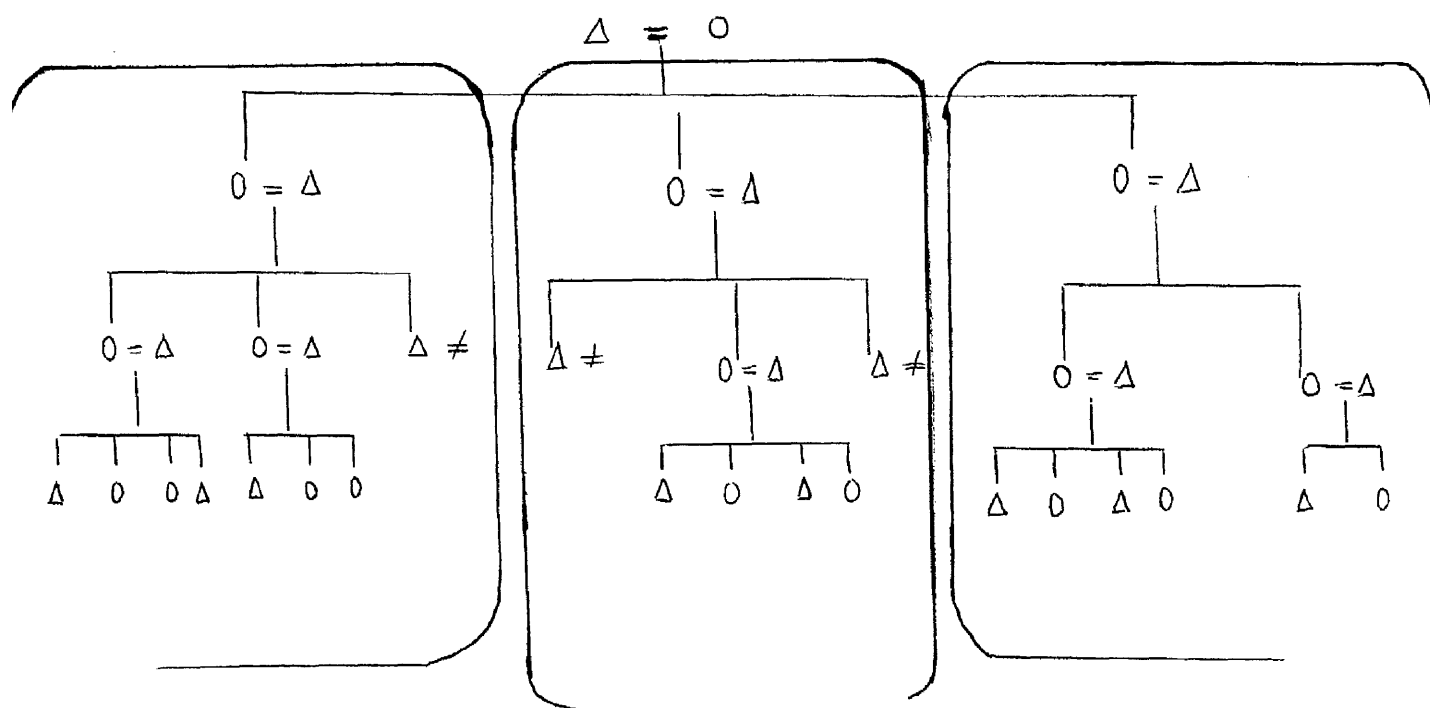
The secondary matrifocal network arises from a further extension of the mother-daughter relation. It includes all the daughters and grand-daughters of a woman, irrespective of residential restrictions. In that sense, it is also a network which emphasizes the bond between sisters, and in a minor way also the bond between maternally related female cousins. Matrifocal networks at their peak reach a depth of four generations. Their focus is on a grandmother, and they include her daughters, grand-daughters and the latter's young offspring.

At the death of the grandmother, the matrifocal network breaks up and new ones spring out of it. Each of her daughters becomes the head of a smaller network which at first consists of her daughters and their offspring. Gradually, with the marriage of these children, the group grows until it takes the full form of a matrifocal network of a depth of four generations, as described below. In that sense, extended families are the initial groups which at a given turn of the life cycle develop into matrifocal networks. The primary matrifocal



nucleus, after generating several new matrifocal nuclei, will itself develop into a matrifocal network.

This structural feature of matrifocality does not concern the relationship solely between female kin. Men are attached to given matrifocal networks according to their married status. Unlike matrilineal kinship systems, sons belong to their mother's matrifocal network and matrifocal nucleus only for as long as they are not married. After their marriage, they belong to their wife's matrifocal group, and their ties with their mother's matrifocal group are lessened and soon fade out completely.



The above scheme shows a given matrifocal network at the time of its dissolution as the result of the death of its female head. Each of the matrifocal nuclei it includes will become a new matrifocal network, taking its full form when the last series of offspring marries.

After World War II, as we have seen, the Fourni community opted for a change of its economy. A certain improvement of its communication with the outside world led to the perception of more profitable economic opportunities. Within the following decade, it changed to a fishing and marine economy. The result was that the community, which until then was based on a subsistence economy, entered a new era characterized by increasing economic development.

In the new marine and fishing economy, the economic agents were men. Women had full participation in the previous economic period, but were now excluded from the new sphere of economy, largely due to the social constraint their role in the sphere of reproduction imposed upon them. Very few women made an exception by being in a position to overcome that social constraint and participate in the new economic activities, but the overwhelming majority was confined to their domestic tasks. Only one area of economic activity was open to them in the new system, and that was local trade, of which they seem to have taken full advantage.

The new sphere of economy involved a change of the means of production and their ownership. The nature of the productive property changed from land and animal stock into fishing boats. At the same time, the labourers and owners of the new means of production were exclusively male. This change in the sphere of production was accompanied by changes in the system of inheritance. The transmission of the productive property of the new economy obeys inheritance rules of patrilineal bias.

I am again employing the term bias, because once more we do not have clear-cut unilineal inheritance. The Fourni kinship system

had a tradition of favouring women, which impeded a sudden complete shift to patrilineal inheritance. Although the new trend dictates the transmission of the maritime means of production from father to sons, there are many instances of diverging devolution. Inheritance of such productive property is almost exclusively male inheritance (there are very few exceptions where women have claimed and achieved a title in such property), but on many occasions it has been distributed between sons and sons-in-law. In brief, in the new economy, inheritance of the productive means is as a rule patrilineal but in actual practice there is also a certain amount of diverging devolution. And that is why I am talking of inheritance rules of patrilineal bias.

Meanwhile, the transmission rules for building and house property remained of the type of matrilineal bias I have described. Land for cultivation (which no longer constitutes the primary means of production in the new marine economy) has also remained subject to the old bilateral rules of inheritance. Inheritance of shops is marked by a shift: the transmission rules favouring male offspring are now indiscriminating of sex, if not favouring female offspring - a probable correlate of female engagement in local trade.

The new economy brought along another change. The productive unit is no longer the nuclear family. Instead, labour teams mostly consist of agnatic groups (father and son, or two brothers and their sons), or they may also involve a son-in-law (father, his son and his son-in-law). We have the same membership as in the inheritance system. The system of inheritance actually mirrors the organization of labour teams, because in the Fourni marine economy there are no distinct classes of owners and labourers: the members of a labour

team (and the labour team consists of the men working on one boat) share the productive property in which they invest their labour. When the labour team consists of an agnatic group (brothers or father and sons), the means of production are distributed at inheritance among these cognatic relatives. When the labour team consists of father, son and son-in-law, the means of production are distributed at inheritance between the son and the son-in-law.

However, although labour teams are recruited along male (and preferably agnatic) lines, matrifocality persists as the dominant structural feature in kinship organization. The cognatic labour teams have not proceeded to develop into solidary kinship groups that would upset the existing kinship structure. They have remained an organizational principle at the level of economic relations. The frequent and prolonged absence of men in the sea functions as a negative social constraint for the development of this economic organizational principle into a kinship organizational principle that would challenge the matrifocal organization of the domestic domain. Meanwhile, women stay back at the village and provide a constant point of reference for the reproduction of kinship cohesion and the articulation of solidary kinship groups.

Another factor that contributed to the maintenance of the matrifocal kinship structure despite the development of labour teams of male relatives in the marine economy, is that only about half the male population engage in fishing and local sea merchant activities. The other half of the village men are wage-earners in the employment of cargo and cruise boats of Piraeus. Hence, while for one half of the population (engaging in fishing and local sea trade) the new economy

meant almost exclusive male ownership (and therefore inheritance too) of the means of the production, for the other half of the population (employed in Piraeus merchant and tourist marine) the new economy meant for men (like women) the lack of ownership (and inheritance accordingly) of means of production. As this phenomenon of the development of mostly agnatic labour and property-owning groups in the new economy concerned only half the population, the force of change was not general enough to sweep away the established matrifocal tradition.

Actually, I believe that the fact that, in the fishing economy, labour recruitment and productive property ownership and inheritance are not patterned along strictly agnatic lines (because the intrusion of sons-in-law undermines the patrilineal trend) is a measure of the strength of the established matrifocal kinship structure.

d) Marriage within a Matrifocal Kinship Organization

The Fourni community has been, until recently, rather isolated from the outside world and contained in itself. At the establishment of the settlement, the first settlers sought wives from the neighbouring islands, but ever afterwards the settlement has been overwhelmingly endogamous.

There does not seem to be any system of preferential marriage. The Greek Orthodox religion prohibits marriage between first cousins as well as between second cousins. The prohibition of marriage between siblings' children is adhered to, and one case of a love affair between first cousins was forcibly prevented and ended in family tragedy with the man killing his beloved. But the prohibition of marriage between second cousins, although acknowledged, is not observed in

practice. There is a large number of such marriages as well as marriages between what the Fourniotes call 'first and second cousins', that is, a marriage between a person and his/her parents' first cousin. Many marriages between cousins of the third degree also take place, but this type of marriage is not prohibited by the Greek Church anyway.

There is no restriction on marriage between affinally related people. The only constraint is that two siblings cannot marry two other siblings except if they have their weddings fixed to be held simultaneously.

The choice of spouses rests primarily with the mother. She contemplates the matter for years and takes a great deal of trouble in picking suitable partners for her children. The father does not concern himself much in the matter, and usually abides by his wife's opinion. Children marry at an age when they are still under the powerful influence and authority of their mothers. Even when they may object to the match arranged for them, in most cases they are finally persuaded or forced into it.

The arrangements for a match are a female matter. Once a mother makes up her mind about a candidate - boy or girl - she embarks on action. First, she tries to influence her child to start an affair with the prospective spouse. Independently of whether she succeeds in that, she then proceeds to convey her wishes to the candidate's mother through a female mediator (a relative or friend). The mediator does not make any direct proposal; she hints at the suitability of such and such a marriage, and waits for reactions. If the approach is not successful, the mother will persist and send other mediators.

It takes a lot of effort and a long time before she may decide that she has been finally and irrevocably rejected; often she keeps exerting pressure until the time the candidate is engaged to somebody else. Then, she will turn elsewhere for an appropriate spouse for her child and start all over again. If the reaction to her indirect proposal is positive, she will proceed to a direct proposal, usually again through a female mediator, and will finally talk it over with the prospective spouse's mother. At that final stage, where the two prospective affinal families come together for the arrangement of the match, the fathers assume an active part which they did not have in all the previous negotiations. Finally, the formal betrothal follows and, after a period of one to three years, the wedding.

The marriage age is between sixteen and twenty for girls, and between nineteen and twenty-four for boys. Girls are often betrothed from the age of thirteen or fourteen, and boys from the age of seventeen or eighteen. At the age of twenty, an unmarried girl enters the category of spinster, her chances of marrying are reduced, and a big dowry becomes necessary as a bait.

Betrothal usually lasts for a period of two to three years. It is regarded as a testing period for the young couple, a period in which they can get to know each other and see if they suit each other. It is at the same time a period during which the man works hard to accumulate money for the 'house' he is about to start, while the girl's family prepares her dowry and a house for the couple. The bride's parents have the obligation to furnish that house fully, apart from the electrical equipment and the bedroom furniture, which are provided by the groom.

Sometimes a betrothal does not end in marriage. The breaking of the engagement is disapproved of by the Fourniotes and results in a lot of gossip, nevertheless, it is not rare. A common reason for breaking off the engagement is the girl's 'sexual conduct' (i.e., her breaking of the code of Honour and Shame according which she ought to remain faithful to her future husband) while her fiancé is employed away from the village. She may start an affair with another man or just flirt, but such news spreads quickly, in which case the fiancé breaks off the engagement immediately. Or, during the betrothal period, the boy may decide he prefers another girl; and if she is considered an appropriate candidate by his parents, a new betrothal is arranged. Finally, when either the girl or boy have been pushed into a betrothal they dislike, and at the same time are in love with some other person, either of them may try to find a way out by what the villagers called 'elopement'.

As I said, marriage choice is to a great degree regulated by mothers. Young people are often forced into marriages they do not desire. Love is an emotion highly praised in Fourni society, but at the same time viewed as temporary, as something that cannot last for long and therefore cannot be taken as a primary contributor to a stable marriage. Rather, the major considerations in a marriage match are a man's reputation as a hard worker, a girl's abilities in housekeeping, good social conduct, the parental families' moral reputation, their financial position, and the young woman's sexual virtue.

A love affair with someone who, from the mother's viewpoint, is undesirable, is fought against by all means. Often the young couple does not have the emotional strength to stand up against maternal



pressure and the affair comes to an end. Those who have the strength of will to go against their parents' wishes resort to elopement.

Elopement is quite a frequent occurrence. It is the institutionalized route of escape in a social system which promotes maternal authoritarianism in marriage arrangements.

The young couple arrange to meet and spend the night together. They may go to a relative's or a friend's house, and when there is no one to support them, they will resort to an empty house, or very often to a chapel. Their parents make a big fuss trying to find them, threatening, cursing, shouting and occasionally even carrying sticks, but almost always fail to find the hide-out of the youngsters. After the couple have spent the night together, they return to their parents, who still make a fuss about it but finally, though unwillingly, accept it as a fait accompli. Since the whole village now knows that the couple have spent the night together, the rules of Honour and Shame oblige them to acknowledge the new couple.

Elopement gives the young man and girl the status of married people. A wedding follows hastily in one of the village's chapels (since it is known that the couple have slept together, they cannot have a wedding in the village's main church). Quite often the parents of one of the spouses may not be present at the wedding as a sign of continuing disapproval. It may also be quite some time before they decide to be reconciled with the newlyweds, but they finally do and let their grudge die. I have not heard of any case of elopement where the parents and children were not reconciled within the first year of marriage, though of course the mother-in-law may stay permanently hostile to her daughter-in-law since she was not the mother's choice of wife for her son.

The bond between mother and son is a very strong one - actually it seems to be the next most solidary relation after that between mother and daughter. The father-son relationship is usually severe and distant, while the mother's brother-sister's son relation is more intimate and cordial (still there is no set of duties and obligations involved in this relationship). The mother, as the focus of nuclear family cohesion, has a close and domineering relation with all her children of both sexes. At the marriage of her children this relationship changes: the bond with the daughter is strengthened and further developed as the mother assumes full responsibility (and accordingly also domination to a considerable extent) of her daughter's nuclear family, while the bond with the son is severed.

Marriage is for a young man the point where he is detached from one matrifocal nucleus (his mother's) to enter a new matrifocal nucleus (his wife's). The detachment of a son from his parental family at marriage is stressful, especially since ever after he is on his own facing the united matrifocal front of his wife.

The relationship between female in-laws is characterized by hostility. During the period of engagement, the daughter-in-law behaves towards her mother-in-law with meekness and politeness. But right after the wedding, war is declared and the battle for domestic power starts. The mother-in-law still clings on to the power she had over her son until then. And the bride fights for her rights in her new home and for power over her husband. Although the fight is a priori lost for the groom's mother, she does not accept the fact readily. She cannot wield any real power over her son any more, but she can - and tries hard to - poison his feelings towards his wife, create as much turmoil

as possible and complain to everybody in the village criticizing and accusing her daughter-in-law of alienating her son from her. The most strained relationship within kinship seems to be the relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

The life cycle of the matrifocal pattern prescribes that single men are affiliated to their maternal matrifocal group, but married men are affiliated to their wife's matrifocal group. All factors - institutional, ideological and psychological - contribute to the ending of the mother's authority over her son. The marriage ideal dictates that the husband become devoted to his wife and the family he is to create, and look upon his in-laws rather than his parental family thereafter. As the villagers put it jokingly, 'First you wanted breast, now you want cunt', or more bluntly, "Now you belong to your wife, and not to your mother any more" (Πρωτα ηθελες βουζακι, τωρα προτιμας μουντακι; Τωρα ανηκεις στην γυναικα σου, και οχι πλα στην μανα σου).

The relationship between the two mothers-in-law (at least during the first years of their children's marriage) is one of antagonism. The groom's mother fights hard against losing her authority over her son, and the bride's mother fights for her daughter's achievement of domestic power and authority over her husband. The wife's mother plays a major part in the competition between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. She and the newlyweds may live under the same roof or in adjoining houses. Her strong bond with her daughter, the structural feature of matrifocality, and the constant co-operation and interaction between the two households gives her both the right and the opportunity to intervene in the couple's life. By mild reprimands, instigations and advice to her son-in-law, she takes an active part in the establishment of her daughter's domestic authority.

The two mothers-in-law create a lot of strain and quarrelling for the new couple. The husband's mother's chief weapon, when she starts losing ground in the field of direct confrontation, is gossip against her daughter-in-law. The gossip makes the round of the village and soon comes to the wife's ears. She, in her turn, complains to her husband that his mother is trying to break up their marriage, becomes sullen and avoids his sexual advances and demonstrations of affection. From the very first months of their marriage, she manages to pull him away from his mother's supervision. The more difficulty her mother-in-law shows in letting go of her authority over her son, the more furious and insistent his wife becomes. In extreme cases of intense competition between the two women, the wife will try to alienate her husband completely from his parental family and keep her children away from her in-laws.

The fathers-in-law take no part in this upheaval. It does not concern them; they have their fixed place in their wives' matrifocal nucleus, and this position is not affected in any way by their children's marriage, nor have they any authority to lose vis-à-vis their children. Hence, they remain amiable and their relationship depends solely on their personal feelings for each other.

The new nuclear family established at marriage has only distant, formal ties with the husband's parental family, and very close ties of dependence with the wife's parental family. From then on, the wife (with her mother's support and guidance) manipulates the husband, with subtle and forceful methods alternatively, in accordance with her own goals and orientation. As the villagers say, 'The woman moulds her husband and shapes him the way she wants him' (η γυναίκα τον πλαφει τον άντρα, τον κανει οπως θελει).

e) Domestic Organization and Male-Female Power Dynamics

Matrifocality is not only the organizational principle of the kinship structure, but also, by extension, the organizational principle of the domestic domain. Residential units consist of uxori-local clusters of the nuclear families of mother and married daughters. This makes for households of the matrifocal extended family type I have mentioned, within which nuclear families have a certain (rather limited) extent of independence.

At marriage, the bride's mother assumes full responsibility for the running of her daughter's domestic tasks. She undertakes the cooking, the housework and the upbringing of her daughter's young children. The young married woman remains a minor under her mother's supervision and authority throughout the period of expansion of her nuclear family.

A new phase of the domestic cycle starts when her children approach the age of marriage and her mother has reached old age. At about that time the married woman achieves full adulthood, making the decisions for her children's future (employment and marriage), and finally reaching the peak of domestic authority at the marriage of her daughters, upon which she becomes the matrifocal head of an extended matrilocal family.

The independence of the nuclear family during the first years after marriage (i.e., the first phase of the domestic cycle) is undermined by the constant intervention and supervision by the bride's mother, who not only intrudes in the newly created nuclear family by undertaking her daughter's domestic tasks (the daughter does have a share in these domestic tasks, but as a minor under her mother's guidance), but she also influences and directs her married daughter in all matters concerning family and domestic life. In other words, her role in this phase of the domestic cycle culminates in the exertion of subtle but decisive household control within the uxori-local residential cluster.

A point of major significance in delimiting the extent of female power within the domestic domain is the fact that throughout the history of Fourni, the control of the family income has been in the hands of women. Even with the change of the economy after World War II, the situation has not changed. The husband works and brings all his earnings to his wife (unmarried men give their earnings to their mothers) who has full control of expenditure and saving.

It seems rather surprising that in the new economy where men are the labourers and the owners of the means of production, their earnings are deposited in the hands of women. It appears that this is a measure of the sexual division of social labour in the new economic period: men work and are away from the village for long periods of time, while women stay in the village and have full responsibility for the domestic domain. Accordingly, women have control of the consumption and expenditure sphere. As they themselves say, 'We hold the wheel' (εμεις κραταμε το τιμονι).

So men work and bring all their income to their wives (or their mothers if they are not married). The women decide on the allocation of the family funds, usually without even consulting their husbands. They plan expenditure on immediate consumption needs, savings and investment on house-building or house expansion, and dowries. Men engaged in fishing and local sea trade keep a certain amount of money for the running of their businesses and deposit all extra profits with their wives. When they need money for some unexpected repair or other emergence, they will request a sum from their wives' savings. Similarly, when men decide on business expansion, they turn first for money to their wives, and in addition may borrow from other villagers, or from a bank when the sum needed is too great.

Women actually practise two types of savings. One is savings with the aim of property accumulation for the benefit of the nuclear family, and especially the children. These savings are more or less known to the husband, and are at some point invested for enlargement of his business, some other profitable enterprise, perhaps the purchase of a shop, on the building and furnishing of dowry houses. In other words, they are savings directed to property accumulation with the purpose of increasing the family wealth, but especially and most importantly, with the purpose of financial provision for the children, because, as I will discuss shortly, this is a community with a child-oriented ideology. In that sense, property accumulation depends on women's savings and is directly under female control. As the villagers say, 'If the woman is not tight, a household cannot prosper' (Αν η γυναίκα δεν είναι νουκοκύρα, το σπίτικο δεν μπορεί να προκοφεί). Or, again to emphasize the female control of the family funds, they say, 'Even if the husband earns in spadesful and the woman spends in spoonsful, he cannot meet her expenses' (Ο άντρας με τη σέσουλα κι η γυναίκα με το κουταλάκι, πάλι δεν την προλαβαίνει).

Women practise a second type of saving. This is secret personal savings they accumulate over the years by extracting small sums of money from the family budget. They may make use of them on some major family crisis, or they are most often discovered after their death, part of them hidden in various places in the house and part in bank accounts in the names of their children.

Men do not have any personal savings. Thrift is an exclusively female activity. What men do instead is to hide small sums of money from their wives or mothers (especially their so-called 'lucky tips',

i.e., their earnings from chance labour for rendering a service), which they then spend in the coffeehouse buying their friends drinks, or gambling.

Women provide their husbands and sons with pocket-money while they stay in the village. When men run short of pocket-money fast and ask for more, the women are most reprovng. This matter of the money allowance a wife grants her husband is a great source of family tension. Men are not supposed to have the right to question their wives' expenditure patterns, but women have the right (and are urged to do so by the community consensus) to question their husbands' and sons' expenses. I have witnessed fierce verbal fights between husband and wife on the matter, and on occasion even physical fighting over a note. Women also search their husbands' clothes after they go to bed and withhold any money they may have in excess. This is such a frequent occurrence that it finds expression in the institutionalized village joke that 'The moon takes all money in excess' (Ο φεγγαρος παρνει τα παραπανισα).

Young men give all their earnings to their mothers until the time of their marriage. The mother may use that money for the immediate consumption needs of her family, or invest it in property accumulation, or, on rare occasions, save part of it to give to him at the time of his marriage. Working sons are a source of extra income for their mothers and this adds to the strain arising at the time the son marries and is detached from his parental family. During the last months preceding a wedding, his fiancée starts making claims on his income for additional expenses on the household prepared for the couple, while his mother does not withdraw her claims until the last moment. A



woman most eloquently stated the situation when telling her son, 'As long as you are mine, I keep it. After your marriage, you can make arrangements with your wife'.

Women have complete responsibility within the domestic domain and, consequently, complete authority within it. The idea of the man being the master in his own home is totally alien to the community of Fourni. Rather, men, in their own household, seem to occupy the position of a welcome guest. Apart from providing an income, they have no other duty within the domestic domain. Wife and husband may often (though not always) discuss together the future of their children, or matters of property accumulation, but the burden of the decision seems to rest with the wife. All practical matters concerning a household, such as a leaking roof or the building of an additional room, for example, are female responsibilities. Men are engrossed in their work and socialising in the coffeehouse. As the villagers succinctly put it, 'Women have the control' (οι γυναίκες κάνουν κουμάντο) within the domestic domain.

During the periods they stay in the village, men disturb the women's daily routine. Their presence makes for extra domestic work as well as for extra worries (dinking and gambling habits, young men's sexual endeavours, etc.). They are constantly scolded for smoking in the house, for coming inside with dirty shoes and dirty clothes, for getting in the women's way while they do some domestic chore, for coming in early for meals, and so on and so on. The men escape from the female domestic domain to the peace of the coffeehouse, where they can smoke, drink and pass the day free of female supervision and scolding. On returning home they are sure to be burdened with some errand (for example, 'Go to the bakery for bread'), or some other tasks, such as climbing

on the roof to cut grapes, taking a young child for a walk, taking some fish to skin by the sea, cleaning an oil-heater. Even daughters treat their father scornfully when they make demands and disturb the smooth running of the household routine. For example, on one occasion, a father asked his seventeen-year-old daughter for a glass of water twice. She was infuriated by his insistence, and shouted at him scoldingly, 'Ah! You must wait! You want it at once!' (Α! Να περιμένεις το θελες αμεσως!).

Men in the household are overruled by their women in conversation with visitors. I had a hard time trying to sustain conversations with men when visiting their houses. Just as they had embarked on some story, the women would butt in and start their own trail of talk. Sometimes, men would try to stop them, telling them to shut up, upon which they received the answer, 'You shut up instead' (Σωπαλνε. Εσυ να σωπαλνεις). I have noted the same with other visitors too, of either sex. Women will not sit back and let the men do the talking (unless they want to concentrate on some specific domestic task), but will enter the conversation full speed whatever the topic.

When a husband and wife have a quarrel, they end up sleeping in separate beds. If it is a big quarrel, the husband leaves the house and goes to sleep in his boat (most villagers own a boat, even if it is a small one used at their leisure time for amateur fishing or taking the family on an excursion to nearby beaches).

The majority of the Fourni men have a passion for gambling in their leisure time. Gambling takes place in the coffeehouses and reaches its peak around New Year's Eve. The gambling stakes start from a round of drinks and reach large sums of money. Gambling provides

the field for the most fierce battles between husband and wife as well as between mother and son (married or not). Men hide money from their wives or even steal it from them to satisfy their passion for gambling. But women are very militant in this matter. If a wife or mother hears that her husband or son is gambling, she goes straight to the coffeehouse, calls him out and makes a scene until she manages to take him home. Mothers are more aggressive than wives, and may barge into the coffeehouse, openly insult their sons and their fellow-players, and break up their game. Some women may even call the police to intervene (when the husband or son keeps on gambling in spite of their efforts) since gambling with money is illegal.

When a woman comes looking for her husband or son in the coffeehouse (for gambling or heavy drinking), the man will usually give in and follow her back home to avoid fuss in front of the other villagers. At the sudden appearance of a wife or mother at the coffeehouse, men jump at the opportunity to shoot off the half-amused, half-insulting joke, 'You'd better hurry back home or she will chase you with the slipper' (Καλλυτερα να τρεξεις σπιτι, ευδαλως θα σε παρει με το παντοφλυδι).

Men very much resent their wife or mother coming to fetch them from the coffeehouse. They feel that they lose esteem in the eyes of the other men, although the majority of males find themselves in the same position in their turn. On returning home, they embark on a big quarrel with their wife or mother for having come to seek them in the coffeehouse, and for placing them in such a shameful position. But the women never give in. They consider it part of their duties to drag men away from gambling, which entails considerable spending without their consent.

Men greatly resent the interruption of their recreational activities in the coffeehouse by their women. They bow to female authority in the domestic domain, but they want to keep up appearances in public. They do not want the other men to say that 'They hold on to their mother's dress' (οτι κρεμονται απο το φουστανι της γυναικας τους), or that their wife keeps them in her knickers' (οτι η γυναικα τους τουν εχει μεσα στη βρακα της). They want to appear independent and masters of themselves. Once I heard a young unmarried man almost pleading with his mother, 'When I come home, you can curse me, call me names, hit me, anything, but do not come to the coffeehouse because the others make fun of me'.

Again, men tease each other about a wife's domineering behaviour:

'Did your wife chase you with the slipper?'

(Σε πηρε η γυναικα σου με το παντοφλιδι?)

'Me? I beat her up.'

(Εμενα ρε; Εγω την πλακωνω)

And then the other men will say among themselves,

'Meanwhile, his wife has turned him into a horse'

(Εν τω μεταξύ, η γυναικα του τον εχει κανει αλογο).

By such comments that aim to make others look subject to wifely domination and put them down, every man tries to prove himself an exception, irrespective of whether or not it is true.

The most widely employed male tactic in confronting female supervision is lies. Men start by lying to their mothers to escape their domination, and then continue by lying to their wives to escape their nagging, quarrelling and the punishment of refusing their husbands' sexual advances. Through lying, men opt for domestic peace.

f) Ideological Aspects of Gender Roles and Family Life

The relationship between the sexes in Fourni is characterized by an undercurrent of antagonism. The structural features that determine this relationship (female appropriation and control of the money men earn, matrifocality and female domestic power) militate against any ideals of harmonious companionship envisaged in the bliss of a love affair preceding marriage. It is characteristic that although a great number of marriages are the outcome of passionate affairs, the flame of love soon subsides in married life and is succeeded by strain and quarrelling. The village philosophy on marriage pronounces that 'The honey soon runs out' (το μέλι σωνεται γρηγορά).

The marriage relationship in Fourni is very fragile, but at the same time the community does not allow an outlet through divorce. There are only three cases of divorce in Fourni history. Divorce is considered shameful (dropi) and couples take special pains to project an image of harmonious marital relationships to outsiders (i.e., not their close kinfolk). Even when the husband-wife relationship is especially strained, they will put on a show of affectionate behaviour to each other whenever they appear together in public. The dissolution of marriage - divorce - is viewed as an open acknowledgement of failure that makes people lose self-esteem in the eyes of the rest of the community. Whenever an individual abandons his/her spouse as a result of major discontent (most commonly caused by adultery) and seeks shelter in his/her parental home, special efforts are made by their kinsfolk to reconcile the couple. Whatever the undercurrents of strain and antagonism between husband and wife, the community opts for marriage stability. The importance placed on marriage stability receives sanction in religious terms:

the Fourni people say that 'When you separate a couple, it is like demolishing a church, and when you reconcile a couple, it is like building a church' (οταν χωριζεις αντρογυνο, ειναι σαν να βουλας εκκλησια, και οταν ανταμωνει αντρογυνο, ειναι σαν να χτιζει εκκλησια).

Village oral tradition has captured the male-female antagonism in a most explicit and expressive style.

If she acquired the power  
to control man  
she would send him barefoot  
to grind wood pieces.

Αν η εξουσια ελαβαινε  
τον αντρα να ορισει  
ξυπολητο θα τον εβανε  
παλουκια ν' αλωνισει.

Go away from a wild animal  
and from burning fire  
and from the wickedness of woman  
when she happens to be angry.

Απο θηριο απαγε,  
κι απο φωτια αναμμενη  
κι απο γυναικα την κακια  
σαν θανατι θυμωμενη.

The antagonism inherent in the relationship between the sexes in Fourni (an antagonism generated within marriage), finds expression in the way men conceptualize women and the way women conceptualize men. Each sex considers the other worthless.

Men view women as 'shit machines' (κουραδομηχανες), which means that they have very little to do, so they sit around and get fat. Men consider domestic tasks as 'child's play' that cannot be compared to hard male labour. They say women are 'useless' (αχρηστες) and only want to drink coffee with other women and gossip and 'receive the money on a dish'.

Women view men as irresponsible and worthless, 'no good but for bringing money'. Women say that 'men have no problems and do not need to think of anything', since 'it is women who have all the responsibilities and have to take care of everything'. Men, according to the female view, are interested only in their own entertainment and are lazy. A woman must press her husband and sons to work more

and earn more, because they do not care enough for the increase in their family's prosperity and have a tendency towards idleness instead. Women also accuse men of indifference in family and domestic matters: 'They are like animals; they only want to eat and sleep', and do not concern themselves with their family and their household problems.

The male and female roles in marriage and domestic life are delineated by a set of positive ideals and negative images. As the terms employed by the villagers are in the village slang, it is quite difficult to give an exact English translation. I have chosen corresponding terms by approximation, followed by brief explanatory notes to indicate more succinctly their exact semantic content. The positive ideals for a married woman are that she is 'a good housekeeper', i.e., wise in household finances and running the household more generally, (νοικοκυρά); that she is 'clean' (καθαρή), i.e., capable in the housework, and that she is chaste (τιμιά), i.e., she has sexual virtue and is faithful to her husband.

The negative images of a married woman include:

1. That she is 'sharp-tongued' (γλωσσού), i.e., that she answers back whenever she feels her position or activities are questioned, that she resorts to insulting counter-attack whenever she feels attacked;
2. That she is 'extravagant' (σπαταλή) or a 'shit-housekeeper' (σκατονοικοκυρά) in managing household finances;
3. That she is 'one for gossip' (κουσελάρα), i.e., that she spends her time discussing other people's problems and hastens to spread around whatever she notices in every household she visits;

4. That she is 'always going around' (γυρουλου), i.e., that she does not look after her household, but spends her time on visits and walks;
5. That she is 'a tart' (πουτανα, σκροφια), i.e., that she commits adultery, or acts as a 'pimp' (ρουφιανα), i.e., that she shields other women committing adultery, and
6. That she is 'two-faced' (δωπλομουρα), i.e., that she behaves differently when face-to-face with someone from when he or she turns their backs.

These positive and negative female images represent the variety of female personality in the village. They show that the ideal type of married woman is one who looks after her household properly (including its expenditure pattern) instead of engaging in external activities (such as gossip and long absences over visits and walks), and one who behaves well towards her family (i.e., is not sharp-tongued, which is a negative attribute, especially when directed at her family and kin), and is faithful to her husband.

The positive ideals for a married man are:

1. That he is a 'good worker' (δουλευταρας), i.e., that he is not lazy and works hard to earn as much money as he can;
2. That he is 'a family man' (οικογενεαρχης), i.e., is concerned with the prosperity of his household and family and is strongly oriented towards property accumulation for the benefit of his children;
3. That he 'has love of honour' (φιλοτιμος), i.e., takes his responsibilities to heart and is conscientious and generous in all transactions and interaction with kin, friends and the community at large; and



4. That he is 'chaste' (τυμπος), i.e., he has sexual virtue and is faithful to his wife.

The negative attributes of a married man are:

1. That he is 'lazy' (τεμπελης, οκνος), which is the opposite of 'a good worker';
2. That he is 'ne'er-do-well' (σκαρτος) or a 'tramp' (αλητης) which is the opposite of 'a family man';
3. That he 'has no love of honour' (αφιλοτιμος);
4. That he is 'brazen' (προστιυχος) and 'a son of a bitch' (παλητομαρο), i.e., that he is a womanizer and unfaithful to his wife;
5. That he is a 'gambler' (χαρτομουτρο) which implies the waste of money over his passion for gambling; and
6. That he 'loves a drink' (αγαπαει το πλοτο) which leads to waste of money and laziness.

A person's character is believed to be moulded and influenced by his/her parental family. A family's reputation in what concerns these positive and negative images affects the marriage chances of its children. For example, a girl or a boy coming of a family with a reputation for chastity are expected to make faithful mates too, and hence have favourable marriage chances. Or, a man who comes from a poor, 'ne'er-do-well' family, is expected to prove lazy and 'ne'er-do-well' himself, and therefore is not a desirable prospective husband. Accordingly, a person's character is judged on the basis of his/her parental family's reputation. The positive and negative attributes of conjugal roles are believed to be perpetuated through descent. The villagers distinguish and evaluate kinship groups on the basis of the perpetuation of certain (either positive or negative) attributes of conjugal roles. Hence, a given kindred

(either a matrilaterally-reckoned kindred or a patrilaterally-reckoned one) may be said, for example, to be characterized as 'family men', while another given kindred may be said to be characterized as 'brazen men and women'. The combination of positive and negative attributes of conjugal roles that characterize families and kindreds plays a role of paramount importance in marriage choices. And when a member of a family deviates (positively or negatively) from the family reputation in such matters, it is considered totally unexpected and surprising. The villagers encapsulate this notion of the perpetuation of attributes of conjugal roles through family and kinship groups in the expression, 'A man of descent and a dog from a sheepfold', which is an abbreviation of the sentence 'a man needs to be of good descent just as a dog needs to have been bred in a sheepfold' (Ανθρωπος απο γενια και σκυλος απο μαντρα).

My discussion up to this point has described the relationship between men and women (and especially between husband and wife), as defined by conflict, strain, antagonism, and opposition. The consequent impression would be that there is no common ground or unity between husband and wife. But this could not be so and, most certainly, is not.

Whatever the strains inherent in conjugal relationships in a society with matrifocal kinship and domestic organization, there is also an aspect of complementarity within marriage. The sexual division of social labour in the Fourni community of today (men earning an income and women directing domestic life and the family funds), on the one hand makes for sharp, sex-differentiated tasks and a sharply sex-differentiated pattern of daily life, but on the other hand involves a certain goal which brings the seemingly estranged husband and wife into unity.

The ideological orientation of the adult individual in this society is the increase of family property and the provision of children with a large inheritance. And here is the point of complementarity in the conjugal relationship. The accumulation of property requires hard work and wise economizing. The husband works to provide an income, and the wife has the direction of the family budget. The joint goal of husband and wife is the augmentation of their property, with the ultimate purpose of providing their children with a higher living standard than their own. In this family-oriented ideology reside the unity and complementarity between men and women.

This society is primarily family-oriented. Every man and women's ambition in life is the material wellbeing of their family, backed up by a spirit of competition among households. The scope and reason for existence of every person is the creation of a family and then the provision of their children with good spouses and financial security. In that sense, it is a future-oriented society. Elder people are left behind, viewed as a burden rather than honoured and respected relatives.

The inner meaning in life for the Fourni people is to beget children and have a family. That gives you scope in life, something to strive for, to hope for, to regret, to rejoice at; in other words, something 'that makes you live your life fully'. The few childless couples are strong evidence of this fundamental family ideology. Their lack of children deprives them of a reason for their existence, of a purpose in life. These people usually adopt some child so that they can fill the gap in their lives and overcome their social disability of childlessness.

There is a lot of excitement and rejoicing upon the birth of children. Grandparents and other close relatives display great sentimentality towards

babies. Exclamations of the type, 'My God and my king', or 'Life of my life', are passionately repeated when cuddling the little ones. But from the time children can go around by themselves (about the age of two), they are left in the street to join the numerous groups of other children who grow up playing and wandering about in the village, going home only for food and sleep.

There is no great concern about their upbringing or their emotional needs. The golden rule in child-rearing has always been shouting commands, cursing and plenty of beating. 'Beat him until his skin swells', 'Beat him until you make him crawl', mothers advise their daughters in reference to their grandchildren. The reasoning is that the only way to make a child grow up into a 'proper man' (να γινεαι ανθρωπος) is by instilling in him the fear of physical violence so that he/she becomes obedient. Severe beating of young children does not cause any regrets or feelings of guilt; it is always watched by grown-ups with a laugh.

No special care is taken for the schooling of the children either. No mother will ever take time to help a child with its homework. What a mother is concerned with is the material wellbeing of the child, i.e., his food and his clothes, especially nowadays when living standards have risen so much.

When I say on the one hand that this is a family- and child-oriented society, and then on the other that parents do not take much care of young children, it may look as if I am contradicting myself. The point is that the people in Fourni concentrate on material provision for their children and strive all their life for the accumulation of more and more property to be inherited by their offspring, and not on the emotional needs of their children.

The begetting of a more or less equivalent number of boys and girls is the most desirable state. There is a preference for the first-born to be a boy who perpetuates the full name (name, middle initial that is the father's name, and surname) of the paternal grandfather. Boys are desirable in any number, as they mean a larger labour force providing family income until the time of their marriage. Girls are equally desirable up to a certain number, as they will help with the housework, perpetuate the kinship matrifocal group when they get married, and look after their parents in old age. 'Girls are the support and comfort of mothers', the villagers say. Still, an excessive number of girls is undesirable, since girls are provided with dowry houses and are more or less aided financially by parents until their death. An excess of girls makes for a disadvantageous splitting of the parental property into smaller shares.

We could say that the village ideological axis that provides a man with a purpose in life is the social life-cycle: the begetting of children, their marriage, and the inheritance of property. People have one ambition in life - to outdo other families in the competition for accumulation of wealth. All one's efforts and decisions rest upon family prosperity and the transmission of increased inheritance to one's children.

There is no other path for personal fulfilment and personal achievement. Individual enjoyment is subjugated to that goal. Work is not an end in itself. It does not give personal satisfaction on its own. It is only the means towards the ideal of increasing family property and providing for the children.

'The man who does not work is useless, an animal, a nothing. Man is made to work, to create. Not for oneself, but for one's children

and grandchildren.' This is a key sentence (often repeated by the villagers) which expresses their child-oriented ideology in a concentrated form. Again, I heard someone say of another villager, 'What does he have to work for anyway? He has no children'.

Women start worrying about their daughters' dowry from the day of their birth. They gradually accumulate all those household utensils and linen that Davis calls 'paraphernalia' and which constitute a major and proudly displayed part of their dowry. The ideal is that daughters are provided with a house, fully-furnished and equipped. As for sons, parents should ideally create some business for them (a fishing-boat, for example), though in actual cases many parents after providing for their daughters cannot afford that too, and have to send their sons to be employed as sailors. There is an unquestionable priority in the provision of a dowry for the daughters.

The decoration of the houses reveals the emphasized family ideology. The walls are covered with photos of new-born babies and couples on their wedding day. Even the religious icons every household possesses have inscribed on the back the dates of birth and deaths of the household members. The whole life-cycle of the household is printed on the house decoration.

#### g) Female Roles in the Public Domain

I have so far discussed the male-female power dynamics within the domestic domain and I will now turn to consider the women's roles and position in the public domain.

Although the sexual division of social labour makes for sex-segregated activities, there are no actual rules that prescribe sex segregation

in social interaction. Women's movement is not restricted within the domestic domain; rather, their role of overall responsibility for the domestic domain and household expenditure brings them into frequent interaction with the public domain.

Women spend a considerable amount of their daily time in the village streets - shopping, hiring builders and other domestic services, paying the household bills, or simply for entertainment. When the weather is bad, entertainment consists of indoor visits. But when the weather is fine, women spend their afternoons or evenings promenading in groups in the village streets, and especially in the area in front of the coffeehouses and the pier. They chat freely with men (relatives, neighbours, close acquaintances), laughing and joking. Interaction between the sexes in public does not jeopardize a woman's modesty; it is interaction in secret or indoors that gives rise to speculations on the nature of interaction between unrelated men and women.

When the weather is fine, the coffeehouses provide the place for entertainment for groups of mixed company. The women promenading in the area join their husbands and fathers at some point in the evening to drink 'ouzo' and eat bits of octopus on the charcoals. Women whose husbands are absent from the village may join groups of close relatives or friends. In the winter, the villagers socialize indoors: they gather in alternate houses in groups where matrilineal kin, neighbours and close friends mix together. At religious celebrations and other festive occasions (baptisms, marriages), they entertain in the coffeehouses. Lately there is an increasing tendency for friends and groups of kin to visit all the more frequently the coffeehouses for entertainment independently of festive occasions. Hence, the coffeehouse is an

exclusively male domain in the daytime, but a place for the entertainment of mixed company in the evenings. A point of major significance is that buying a drink, which is supposed to be an exclusively male prerogative throughout Greece, can also be practised by women in the Fourni community. A woman cannot invite a man into the coffeehouse and offer him a drink on her own, but if she is sitting in the coffeehouse with her husband, she can order a drink for a close kinsman sitting by himself or just entering. Similarly, a woman passing by a coffeehouse can order a drink for a close kinsman sitting in the coffeehouse and then continue on her way.

In addition, the coffeehouse situated at the far end of the row of coffeehouses is not frequented by too many men. In fine weather, women can sit at the tables outside this coffeehouse, unaccompanied by men, and order soft drinks on their own.

Men's work takes them away from the village for long periods of time, and, accordingly, women have undertaken a large range of social activities concerning the functioning and reproduction of village life. Most such activities in other Mediterranean communities are traditionally male activities.

Women have the responsibility for their children's education. They make all the necessary arrangements, communicate with the teachers, and decide at which stage to interrupt a child's schooling. Then, they make arrangements for older boys' training and employment. When the father owns a boat, the boy is usually sent to work with him. Otherwise, a mother may send her son to a craft apprenticeship (carpentry, building, baking, etc.) or issue a sailing permit on his behalf and send him to work in cargo or cruise boats at Piraeus.

Women also undertake all arrangements concerning their children's marriage: the choice of a suitable spouse, the building of a dowry house,



travelling to Piraeus or the island of Samos to purchase the house furniture and equipment; the accumulation of the dowry 'paraphernalia' (Davis's term, 1980), the practical and ceremonial preparations for the wedding.

Women also have full responsibility for undertaking house-building. They decide when there are enough funds to start on such a project, they hire, supervise and pay the builders, and they invest personal labour in minor tasks for the finishing of a house. Most men do not know the first thing about the building of houses, while women can rightly be said to be experts on the topic.

Women have also undertaken the interaction with public welfare services: the issue and renewal of a free medical care card, the issue of birth, baptism, marriage and death certificates, the issue of pension cards, the arrangement of certificates for the collection of state donations to children at Christmas, Easter, and so on.

Finally, women are not restricted from the sphere of political life either. Far from it. The political sphere in Fourni has a limited range. It involves a community council with a negotiatory role (applying to state government for the provision of public works and public welfare services), and the community's participation in national elections. The community council has always consisted of male members. There are no other positions of political power and women never come near one. Still, women engage in heated political argument, both on the level of community matters and on the subject of national and party politics.

At the time I went to Fourni, there was a great fuss over the inadequate water supply. The village suffers from low rainfall and consequently is short of water even for household needs. The Community Council president decided on a new measure of installing a water meter in each household

to control the allocation of water. The village women were furious at the suggestion, and finally the president had to abandon the idea.

One day, a woman stopped the president in the street and pointed her finger at him:

'Put it out of your minds! Water meters won't be allowed.'

'I will cut out your tongue', the president retorted jokingly.

'You just try and see', she shouted back in fury.

Women have specific opinions in all political matters and support them with extreme fervour. Although the debate on the location of a harbour (a project promised by today's government) does not really affect them, they get involved in endless verbal fights on the subject.

In the choice of party affiliation and their consequent casting of a vote in national elections, women have minds of their own. Actually, their dedication to party support reaches the point of fanaticism. Some women support their husband's political affiliation, and some women influence their husbands on their voting choice. An illustration of this (though not representative of the community trend) is the case of a man who acquired the nickname 'Papagos' (Παπάγος) because he was left wing, but his right-wing wife persuaded him to vote openly (i.e., outside the curtain hiding the voting box) for the right-wing prime minister, Papagos.

My point is by no means that the Fourni women have any political power (actually, Fourni men do not either, apart from the field of community elections for a community council which again, however, is devoid of real political power). The point I want to stress is simply that women are concerned with politics, have political opinions of their own, discuss political matters a great deal, engage in arguments over politics in public, and play a major role as a pressure group in community matters.

There remains one last, and most crucial aspect of women's social position in Fourni to be considered. Women are the prime agents of social cohesion in this society. Men are absent from the village frequently and for long intervals, while women provide stable focal points for the articulation of social relations which makes for social cohesion and the reproduction of the social structure.

Women in Fourni are the main agents of initiating and maintaining social links among unrelated families. First of all, they do so at the level of the neighbourhood. The nature of the relations between neighbours depends on women.

Women spend a major part of their time at home, and hence have frequent interaction with their female neighbours (chatting, quarrelling, exchanging gossip, exchanging services, exchanging information, borrowing things from each other, etc.). Men come home at those times of day when families retire inside their houses (meals, evening recreation, etc.), and do not get much chance to cultivate neighbourly relations.

Women, meanwhile, having established close relations of friendship and reciprocity with some of their female neighbours, proceed to expand these relations at an intra-family level. They invite the family of a befriended neighbour to spend the evening together. In this network of exchange of visits among neighbourly families, men have a more or less passive role, accepting their wives' initiatives.

At the community level, too, women initiate and maintain social ties among unrelated families. Men form relations of friendship within the domain of the coffeehouse, but never extend them to relations involving their families. Male friendship develops and exists only within the confines of the coffee-house. But female friendship extends and grows into friendship relations between families too.

In the early morning and the afternoon, women gather at each other's houses to share coffee, chat and engage in embroidery and lace-work (the typical female leisure activity, which, however, is directed to the goal of accumulating linen for daughters' dowries). A woman may go to a neighbour's or a kinswoman's house, where she meets neighbours and kinswomen of the housewife. That is how friendship ties between women, who are neither related by kinship and affinity nor neighbours, are formed. Female friends then visit each other's house for coffee gatherings.

We can draw an analogy between the coffeehouse and these female recreational congregations. As the coffeehouses constitute a male space, the ensemble of households at certain times of the day constitute a female space, both serving the purpose of companionable sharing of leisure time, in accordance with the principle of sex segregation that governs the sexual division of labour. Such an analogy presupposes a viewpoint of the coffeehouse as not belonging to a public domain in counter-distinction to a domestic domain. Indeed, I suggest that in Fourni that is the case. It is significant that the villagers themselves refer to female coffee gatherings by the term 'the female coffeehouse', which shows a conceptual parallelism of the two.

In other Greek communities, the coffeehouse seems to function as a centre for social interaction in what has been called the public domain, concerned with political issues, community affairs, the settling of economic and ownership disputes, decision-making on education, job-training and occupational chances, negotiations on the exchange and trading of services, etc. In Fourni, however, the coffeehouse does not function as such a socially important centre. Fourni men do not concern themselves with

many of these issues. For them, the coffeehouse is mostly a place for passing their leisure time enjoyably (playing backgammon, gambling, drinking), speculating about government policies concerning their island, discussing party politics and political issues that concern the outside world, exchanging views on fishing and sailing, discussing employment in cruise and cargo boats, exchanging information on economic matters (bank loans, business expansion, purchase of engines, profitable enterprises, etc.), boasting about economic prosperity and displaying affluence (e.g., buying large rounds of drinks, gambling heavily), gossiping about family and individual prosperity, behaviour and morality.

The coffeehouse is a place for male interaction, the creation of individual friendships and the discussion of those matters that are the men's concern: politics (that lack a field of practice, though), problems involved in their economic enterprises, matters of honour and social prestige. In that sense, the coffeehouse is no more public than the domestic domain, or rather, the domestic domain is no more private than the coffeehouse. After all, the domestic domain, if perceived as the field of female activities and interaction, includes the exchange of public services, a network of local trade liaisons, the handling of marriage arrangements, educational and occupational arrangements, ownership disputes, matters of honour and social prestige.

Actually, I believe that the domestic domain/public domain dichotomy is not useful as an analytic tool for the discussion of the Fourni community. It seems that there does not exist a sharp differentiation between the domestic and the public domain of the kind that is usually reported for other Greek and Mediterranean communities. Rosaldo (1974) has suggested that where the private/public distinction is weak or non-existent, where

neither sex claims much authority and the focus of social life is the home, the male-female relationship will be more egalitarian. I think that this hypothesis is applicable to the case of Fourni. The relative power of Fourni women seems to be associated with a weak distinction between the domestic domain and the public domain.

We see that both men and women create networks of individual friendship in their separate (though parallel, in my view) places of recreation. The important difference is that while male friendship remains a relationship between two individuals of the same sex and manifests itself solely within the coffeehouse boundaries, female friendship develop beyond the extent of the female coffee gatherings and is turned into a friendship that embraces their family too.

Such inter-family friendships take the form of congregations of small groups of families (two to six families) that appear together in private and public socializing occasions. On winter evenings, families of friends may gather in one house for recreation. On summer evenings, they join together outside the coffeehouses to drink 'ouzo' and eat octopus-on-the-coals. On Saints' Days, they visit the house of a namesake member. On religious occasions, they go as a group to the church or other ceremonial place. On fiestas, they share the same table at the coffeehouse and dance as a group. On religious occasions, or simply for recreation, they go together on excursions to various chapels around the island. In brief, they appear as a group on public occasions.

Women, then, are pivotal social actors in the organization of matrifocal kinship networks, neighbourly interaction, and networks of inter-family friendship. In other words, women are the agents and focal points for the creation and reproduction of the most important social ties that

keep community members in interaction and cohesion. If we add women's major role in local trade liaisons and the exchange of public services, we may come to the question of what is men's role in the maintenance of community social relations. The answer to that, in my view, is that their role is secondary in comparison to women's role. And the reason for that seems to be the frequent absence of men from the village, while women provide stable focal points of reference.

Women are the focal points of the kinship structure, domestic organization, neighbourly relations, friendship networks, trade liaisons within the community, the transaction of public services, and - as I will discuss in the following chapters - the organization of the rites of passage and the realm of magic.

In short, the social position of women in the society of Fourni can be encapsulated as follows: women are not social actors restricted to the domestic domain. Instead they have social roles essential for the organization, cohesiveness and reproduction of the community.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### HONOUR AND SHAME

##### a) The Sociolinguistics of Honour and Shame

I would like to start this chapter from a sociolinguistic viewpoint and look into the contextual semantics of Honour and Shame in the Greek language in general and the Fourni idiom in more detail.

Greek is not a uniform language. Not only is there a great number of regional differences and local dialects, but even in the Greek capital, Athens, we encounter considerable variety of style and semantics among different social strata. The semantics of Honour and Shame in each of these linguistic contexts is a very big topic that would require a whole study on its own. Here I will pick on one linguistic variety, the language of the mass media and educational institutions (a variety that is encountered mostly among people engaged in occupational areas such as teaching, scientific work, art, writing, the mass media, office work). It is to this linguistic variety that I will refer whenever I mention the Greek language in the following text.

The Greek translation of the English word 'honour', as given in the dictionary, is 'timi' (τιμη). But actually, in the Greek language, the word 'timi' does not carry the full semantical meaning of the English word 'honour'. It has, instead, the restricted meaning corresponding to the English word 'virtue'.

The English word 'honour' has a wider semantic field: 'honour' also refers to a family's or a person's good name and prestige. Honour, in that wider sense, can be damaged by insult, cheating, material injuries, loss of status, money or power. But in the Greek language, 'timi'



basically involves matters of sexual virtue. This may be seen by looking at the context within which the word 'timi' is usually found in Greek: 'crimes of timi' (εγκλήματα τιμης) 'a woman's timi' (η τιμη μιας γυναικας), 'she lost her 'timi' (εχασε τη τιμη της), 'a matter of timi' (ζητημα τιμης), 'his timi was damaged' (ντροπιαστηκε η τιμη του); all instances referring to sexual virtue. Even more characteristic is the well-known proverb on a woman's virtue, 'The timi has no price, and glad be he who has it' (η τιμη, τιμη δεν εχει, και χαρα στον που την εχει). The Greek translation of the word 'shame' is 'dropi' (ντροπη), which is employed in a limited context: 'shame on you' (ντροπη σου), 'shameless' (ξεδαντροπη), 'shameful' (ντροπαλος), 'being ashamed' (ντρεπωμαι).

In the Greek language, the meaning of the English lexical item 'honour' more accurately is, I believe, the 'love of honour' (filotimo). The Greek expression 'a man with love of honour' (ενας αντρας με φιλοτιμο) is the most appropriate semantic equivalent to the English term 'honourable'.

I will now turn to the semantics of Honour and Shame in the society of Fourni. Here, the English term 'honour' is split into two concepts: the one is the concept 'love of honour' (filotimo) and the other is the concept 'self-respect' (egoismos). Meanwhile, the common translation of the English lexical item 'honour' (i.e., the Greek word 'timi') carries the semantical meaning of the English word 'virtue', as in the Greek language in general.

In Fourni, the 'filotimo' (love of honour) denotes conforming to this society's role prescriptions within the realms of the nuclear family, kinship and the village community. A man has 'love of honour' when he takes good care of his family; when his behaviour towards his kin and

his fellow-villagers is characterized by the spirit of reciprocity and co-operation; when he helps others in times of distress; when he is straight in his social transactions and keeps to his word and his promises; when he does not insult or hurt other people; when he does not try to promote his own interests by causing harm to others. The term is similarly employed for both men and women (filotimos, filotimi).

The opposite term 'afilotimia' ('lack of love of honour') implies anti-social behaviour and the non-fulfilment of one's expectations towards family, kin and fellow-villagers. For example, a man is 'afilotimos' when he ill-treats his wife, does not give her all or most of the money he earns, is lazy and does not seek to improve his family's living standards, does not help his kin when he is supposed to, turns against friends, is irritable and temperamental in his relations with his neighbours, does not reciprocate one good turn by another vis-à-vis his fellow-villagers, accuses or insults other people without good reason, etc.

It is obvious, therefore, that 'filotimo' is a non-competitive notion. The implication of its semantics is that Fourni society places a high value on the principles of co-operation and reciprocity among its members. However, in practice, this society is also competitive. Even close kinsmen have fierce quarrels and come to enmity in antagonism for prestige and material interests.

This competitive aspect of the community also finds expression in the local understanding of honour, in a different concept, 'egoismos', which dictionaries translate as 'egotism'. In the Greek language in general, it does truly have the meaning of 'egotism' or 'selfishness'. But in Fourni it carries a very different meaning: it denotes a complex notion that is a combination of pride and dignity. It is the idea that while one

ought to have 'love of honour' and not let down or injure or insult others, at the same time one ought also to look after one's own interests whenever they clash with other people's interests, ought not allow oneself to be let down or cheated or insulted or otherwise injured either. I think that the best way to express this notion in English is by the word 'self-respect'. One should have 'self-respect' and not let others take advantage beyond the boundaries prescribed by one's social obligations.

Hence, we might say that these two terms together (i.e., 'filotimo' and 'egoismos') provide the two aspects of the English word 'honour'. The word 'filotimo' represents its non-competitive aspect (that aspect that prescribes reciprocity and good will towards one's family, kin, friends and fellow-villagers in general), while the 'egoismos' represents its competitive aspect (that aspect that prescribes that one should protect oneself and one's nuclear family from any verbal or material injury by others).

So far, Fourni seems to be like every other Greek community in that its notion of honour has both a competitive and a non-competitive aspect. The essential difference lies in the balance of these two aspects. Campbell, when he describes Sarakatsani society in Northern Greece, points out that the competitive aspect of their notion of honour is the one with the greatest emphasis, while 'the love of honour' is an epithet never attributed by one Sarakatsanos to another unrelated shpeherd, because they believe that the responsibilities which each individual owes to the family group absolutely preclude his acting in this manner (1964:295).

If, for analytical purposes, we conceive of a continuum of differentiated degrees of the competitive and the non-competitive aspects of the notion of honour, then we would place the Fourni community at one extreme and the Sarakatsani community at the other.

In Fourni the emphasis is definitely on the 'love of honour', as we have seen. A man will be severely criticized on any occasion upon which he does not show appropriate 'love of honour'. In addition, there are many instances when a person will leave aside his feelings of 'egoismos' and will not be aroused against insult, injury and ill behaviour by others. In such cases, the local notion of 'filotimo' takes precedence over that of 'egoismos'. The person who takes an insult or injury calmly and, although his 'egoismos' has been hurt (εβουχθηκε ο εγωισμος του) does not answer back, is praised as someone who has 'love of honour' and wants to avoid quarrelling and ill-will between himself and his co-villagers.

And, most importantly for the subject of our discussion, in instances of insult to a woman's virtue, the rule is that a man will not react violently and will not seek revenge although his 'egoismos' has been damaged. He will more or less "swallow" the fact that he has been dishonoured (οτι εχει ατιμαστει) and leave aside his 'egoismos'.

We can now consider the negative components of honour. The English word 'dishonour' is translated in Greek as 'atimia' which has two distinct meanings. First, it has a wide meaning which refers to the violation of the general ethical code of the society (acts of cheating, stealing and killing). Then it has a more narrow meaning which refers to the violation of the ethics of sexual virtue.

One is 'dishonourable' (atimos) when one has been involved in a major breach of the society's rules on cheating, stealing and murder. Again, a man and a woman are 'dishonourable' (atimos, atimi) when they do not keep their sexual virtue. A 'dishonourable' man is also 'unworthy' (σκαρπος), 'the son of a whore' (γλος πουτανας), 'son of a bitch'

(καθαрма), 'shameless' (ξεδαντροπος, ξετσιπωτος). A 'dishonourable' woman is also 'unworthy' (σκαρτη), 'a tart' or 'a whore' (πουτανα), 'rabid' (λυσσασμενη), 'shameless' (ξετσιπωτη, ξεδαντροπη), 'a she-goat' (κατσικα), 'brazen' (προστυχη).

Instances of dishonour (atimia) are associated with a feeling of shame (dropi). Instances of 'lack of love of honour' (afilotimia) can similarly be related to feelings of shame, though to a much lesser degree.

'Dropi' is the feeling accorded to the actor, as well as to people related to him, in association with a deviation from the dictates of the Fourni code of Honour and Shame, i.e., in matters of sexual virtue, as well as from the general ethical code of the community.

'Dropi' is basically a feeling of apprehension of community values and community judgment. As such, it can be manifested in two different ways. A feeling of 'dropi' may inhibit a person from violating the moral code: 'I am ashamed of the people', i.e., of what people will say about me (ντρεπομαι τον κοσμο), the villagers often say. A feeling of 'dropi' may also be the after effect of an 'atimia': the person who has broken the moral code may feel ashamed of his conduct.

Therefore, 'dropi' may be either a feeling that motivates conformity to the moral code and social norms, or may be a feeling that is generated by the simultaneous acknowledgement and violation of the moral code.

People who repetitively do not exhibit sexual virtue (e.g., by not giving up adultery) are called 'xethiandropi', i.e., shameless. They ought to 'be ashamed' (na dreponte), but since they insist on deviating from the prescribed moral conduct, the villagers accuse them of not possessing the appropriate sense of shame they should feel for their deviational act.

'Dropi' has also a third meaning. 'Atimia' does not only make the actor and his family and kinsfolk 'feel ashamed' (νεντροποντικῶ) thus acknowledging the society's moral rules, it also makes them liable to the passing of judgment by the community. The violation of moral values bring 'dropi' to them and hence a loss in esteem and moral reputation. They are put to shame (ντροπαλιζονται) in the eyes of their co-villagers.

Schematically, we can summarize the Fourni conceptual model of Honour and Shame as follows:

Components of the Concept of Honour in Fourni Society

Honour as sexual virtue	> timi	(opposite: atimia)
Honour in social obligations	> filomoto	(opposite: afitotimia)
	> egoismos	

Fourni Terms : their Semantics in Translation

Timi	= sexual virtue
Atimia	= breach of sexual virtue
Timios	= a person of sexual virtue, honourable
Atimos	= a person without sexual virtue, dishonourable
Filotimo	= love of honour
Afitotimia	= lack of love of honour
Filotimos	= a person loving honour
Afitotimos	= a person not loving honour
Egoismos	= self-respect
Dropi	= a feeling of 'being ashamed', and a state of 'being put to shame', generated on occasions of a violation of the community values, and in particular of sexual virtue
Xethiandropos	= a person who does not feel ashamed upon violating the moral code, a shameless person.

b) Conceptualizations of Sexuality

The data on the manifestation of the idiom of Honour and Shame in Fourni point to a pattern quite distinct from the usual one reported in the anthropological studies of the Mediterranean area.

The major points of difference can be summed up briefly as the following:

1. There is a major cultural emphasis on sex which is regarded as pleasurable and an extensive sex-implicating language that points out this emphasis.
2. The ethical code on matters of Honour and Shame is not very strict. There are no special modesty observances in dress, speech and behaviour in public.
3. We do not encounter strict sex segregation rules.
4. Pre-marital sex is the rule rather than the exception.
5. Adultery is common.
6. There are no instances of physical violence, crimes and revenge upon the violation of sexual virtue.

I will start the discussion by considering folk conceptions about sex. I think that a society's ethical code on sexual virtue relates to a large extent to how that society views sex. A comparison of the findings of this research on Fourni to the findings of research in other parts of the Mediterranean (and in particular to Campbell's records on the Greek Sarakatsani) points, in my view, to such a hypothesis.

In Fourni, sexual contact is not seen as polluting or dirty in any way. Men do not care to wash afterwards, and many women do not either. Lots of couples told me they use a towel to wipe away the semen after 'withdrawing'.

There is only one exception where we encounter the notion of sex as polluting. This exception concerns contact with the supernatural. Women who have had sex on the previous evening, should not kiss the Saint's icon upon entering the church. They can light a candle and cross themselves in front of the icon, but their lips must not come in contact with the icon because they are polluted. The very same taboo holds for menstruating women too. However, I believe that this notion of sex pollution and concomitant avoidance of contact with the supernatural is not what we might call a 'folk' conception, i.e., not a conception springing directly out of this society's ideational schemas on sex. Rather, it is an 'imported' idea: an idea dictated by the Christian Orthodox theology and found throughout Greece. In that sense, it is an idea that the first settlers brought along upon their establishment on Fourni, and not an idea produced later during the process of amalgamation of ideological elements of different origins into a distinct society.

But what is perhaps surprising and most significant is that this pollution taboo concerns only the women. It follows that sex pollutes only women, but does not affect men in the same way.

What is more, people not only do not avoid sex during menstruation, but actually prefer it. Because the women do not employ any external or internal contraceptive device (the pill, the coil or the sheath), couples feel free to enjoy sex without 'withdrawing', as they believe that women cannot conceive while menstruating.

First of all, people talk freely about their personal sex life. Women will talk to their girl-friends (on frequency of contact, their husband's preferences, their husband's warmth and sexuality, birth control, etc.), and men will talk to male friends. A couple's sexual life is not



a strictly private matter. They will either boast or pour out their complaints about their partner. Some people are more outspoken on their sexual life, others are more reserved. Some men also boast about their extra-marital affairs, especially if they are not in love with the woman concerned, and give out details as to sexual games and that woman's behaviour in bed.

I will quote a few cases here to illustrate the bold way in which some people discuss sex in public.

A husband, during a fierce quarrel with his wife over an adulterous affair he was having, shouted in the streets, in front of other people, that she had no right to resent it since 'hers [genitals] are too large' (αφου το δικο της ειναι τοσο φαρδου). As the villagers explained to me, a woman who has had many children 'has it large' and cannot give her husband satisfaction any more. None of the people present at this verbal exchange between husband and wife was shocked. They laughed at the man's outspoken manner, and the incident was soon repeated as a good joke throughout the whole village.

Another story, which was considered by the villagers as very amusing, was going around the village at the time of my research. A man had gone with his wife on an excursion to a remote beach. After swimming naked, the husband made his wife lie on a rock heated by the sun, so that she could not but shake during intercourse (για να κουνιεται). As my informants explained to me, the implication was that his wife would not move while having sex, so the man resorted to that amusing trick to get what he wanted.

Discussing their sexual life in public is not only a male prerogative. About ten years ago, a woman, after a series of adulterous affairs, abandoned

her husband. She stated in public (in a boat, in the presence of both men and women) that the reason was that 'he was too quick and she could not have an orgasm'.

Sex is not a topic to be avoided among kin, either. Sexual talk is not taboo between mother and son, father and daughter, brother and sister, parents-in-law and their children-in-law, or any other kinship relationship. Jokes concerning their personal sexual life of their children (married or unmarried) are often mentioned by mothers in front of them.

At the time of my research, a woman, on the day after her daughter's wedding, asked her son-in-law how many times he had performed on the wedding night. In the week before the wedding, the bride and her kinswomen wash her 'paraphernalia'. The father-in-law entered the house where they were ironing and commented on the bride's underwear that was drying in the yard: 'I saw all the "flags" out there. I thought the clouds were hiding the sun, but it was the shadow of all those knickers'.

At a social gathering one evening, a village woman was narrating a sexual story to me. In the middle of the narration, as she was referring to male genitals, she stretched out her hand, almost touched the man next to her, and said to him, 'be careful, in-law, or I may catch yours'. Everybody present had a great laugh.

During a fiesta in a coffeehouse on Carnival Sunday, some young men, who had drunk a bit, started comparing the size of their genitals to the screw top of a whisky bottle. The women around joined in the laughter, without any sign of embarrassment.

The villagers of Fourni also make mild jokes of a sexual nature to each other. Such jokes are quite dominant in everyday social interaction, and are a sign of friendship and closeness. They are even exchanged between men and women.

A middle-aged woman went to a friend's house seeking the husband on some business matter. He was not in and his male cousin asked the woman the purpose of her visit. She said she wanted to give him a kiss but they had better not tell him for he would be disappointed as it was an older woman who wanted to kiss him.

On another occasion, a young woman entered a shop. She seemed to be having a bad attack of influenza. The proprietress of the shop asked her, laughing, whether her husband did not 'warm her up at night'. That same proprietress was showing knickers and bras to a female client on another day. There were two men present in the shop at that time. Talking about bra sizes, she joked about her own 'cow-like tits'.

On yet another occasion, in a shop again, a young woman asked for a herring with roe. She added that her husband always insisted on a herring with roe. The proprietress jokingly suggested that then the husband 'should make the herrings have roe' (ν αὐγώσεν τὸς πεγγες) - a joke with sexual implication as roe is the result of fish mating.

Then there is also a repertoire of sex-related 'anecdotes' that people repeat in social gatherings, in the presence of mixed company. These 'anecdotes' are not so mild in context. They approach the subject of sex with a directness rather shocking by European standards, and are accompanied by relevant gestures. They can be said to have the function of parables. There are mainly two kinds: those which, by way of exaggeration, emphasise the importance of sex; and those which, by way of joking, stigmatize a certain social situation.

Among those of the first kind there are usually those 'anecdotes' that by exaggerating criticize male shyness, and stress the local cultural importance accorded to male sexual potency and sexual performance.

An often-recited such anecdote relates the story of a young man who showed complete ignorance on his wedding night. As the story has it, he did not know which are the parts of the body with which the sexual act is concerned. He had only been told 'to put it in a hole'. So, he tried his wife's ear, then his wife's eye, then her navel. Another story tells us about a man who again could not perform on his wedding night. His mother-in-law explained the matter to him by way of a paradigm. She told him that the sexual act is the same as when one puts the key into a keyhole.

Such anecdotes in combination with the magical precautions taken on the wedding day to prevent the 'binding' of the groom (when a piece of net and a pair of scissors are inserted in the pocket of the groom's suit and also under his pillow on the nuptial bed to make sure that he will not be 'bound' and hence unable to perform on his wedding night), point out this society's great concern with sexual life.

The anecdotes of the second kind are those which are recited with the purpose of stigmatizing relations or situations. They do not concern a sexual matter in itself. They are directed to another subject, which is touched on by means of a sexual language.

For example, a mother wanted to tell her son that she thought he did not work hard enough. After having told him so in so many words, she tried to reinforce her lecturing of him by means of such an anecdote. She quoted the anecdote of a lazy young man who excused himself by saying to his mother, 'Oh, my wife's is so sweet' (the actual wording of the subject is missing, since the sociolinguistic rules of this community have it that persons of different sex and close kinship usually mention sex in an indirect way).

Another anecdote of this kind refers to the relations between in-laws. A woman resented having her mother-in-law living in her house, and asked her husband to make her leave. He did so, but that same night, he tied up his genitals, and when his wife asked him what had happened, he replied that his mother had taken them with her. This lasted for a week. Finally, the wife asked her mother-to-law to come back to her house. That night, she started patting her husband's genitals playfully, and said, 'Dahtirdi, when the mother goes, you go too?' This anecdote stigmatizes the unusual case of a mother-in-law living in the same house as her daughter-in-law.

Another anecdote is occasionally mentioned when discussing virginity. A young girl had told her husband that she had lost her virginity when, as a little girl, she fell up on the hills. People laughed at the husband for having accepted such an explanation. This anecdote stigmatizes the situation of marrying a girl who has had affairs with men other than her future husband.

Another area of social life where sexual implications predominate is that of cursing and calling names. Cursing and calling names in Fourni is conceptualized in reference either to the supernatural or to sex or both. Instances of cursing in terms referring to the supernatural are the following: 'Go to hell' ('Άελ στο διαολο), 'May the devil get your mother and father' (Να σου παρει ο διαολος τη μανα και τον πατερα).

Instances of cursing in reference to sexual matters are far greater in number: 'I'll fuck you', 'I'll fuck your mother and father' (Να σου γαμω τη μανα και τον πατερα), 'I fuck the cunt that threw you out' (Να γαμησω το μουνι που σε πεταγε), 'I fuck your guts' (Γαμω το στανιο σου), 'I fuck my horn' (Γαμω το κερατο μου). There are also

Four related males share the nickname 'the Hot Cock' (ο Γκαβλης). A father, his three sons and his two daughters have the nickname 'fucker' (γαμαος). Another man is known by the nickname 'sock' - a mispronunciation of the word 'cock' - ο σωλης - because when he was a little boy he was heard shouting to his mother, 'Mother, look at those "socks"' (Μαμα, κοιτα αυτες τις σωλες). Yet another woman renowned for her adulterous affairs, has the nickname 'bottler' (μπουκαλου).

These nicknames are freely mentioned among the villagers without anyone paying any special attention to their sexual insinuations. The daughter of one of the men nicknamed 'Fucker' has married the son of one of the men nicknamed 'Hot Cock'. The villagers sometimes mention it as a good joke: 'The Fucker's daughter married the Hot Cock's son'.

Finally, we encounter an artistic and recreational area where the Fourni cultural emphasis on sex becomes even more obvious. This is the area of songs and poems.

On the one hand, we have various poems and songs which are the product of the villagers themselves. They are recited for the purpose of amusement at social gatherings and fiestas. For example:

If you see the young girl	Άμα την δεις την κοπελια
to have hair on the legs	κι εχει στις γαμπες τρυχες
she has a mouth one mile long	εχει το στομα μια οργια
and a cunt six feet long.	και το μουνι εξη πηχες.

Knock your high heels	Χτυπα το τακουνακι σου
and start your dance	και συρε το χορο σου
to make your skirt rise	να σηκωθει η φουστα
and see your hairy thing.	να δω τα μαλλιαρο σου.

various instances of name-calling by reference to sex: 'cunt', 'dirty cunt' (βρωμομουνο), 'cunt towel' (μονοπανο), 'ball' (αρχιδυ), 'bastard' (μπασταρδε), 'queer' (πουστη), 'cuckolder' (κερατας), 'masturbator' (μαλακας), 'dirty whore' (βρωμοπουτανα), 'bad whore' (παλιοπουτανα), 'son of a whore' (γιε ποϋτανας).

Then there are also certain insulting expressions formulated along sexual terms: 'We made it like a cunt for hat' (τα καναμε μουνι καπελλο), which means that we made a mess of it. 'The world is on fire and the cunt is being combed' (ο κοσμος καλυγεται και το μουνι χτενιζεται), that means that someone does not give a damn while there is a crisis going on. 'The world is about to end and cock-masts sail' (εδω ο κοσμος χανεται, φωλαρμπουρα αρμενιζουν), which again means the display of indifference in facing a crisis or problem.

Cursing in sexual terms insults the values determining the idiom of Honour and Shame : female chastity and male virility.

The instances of cursing by reference to both the supernatural and the sexual are the strongest and most insulting ones. Such are the following: 'I fuck your Virgin Mary' (Γαμω την Παναγια σου), 'I fuck your cross' (Γαμω τον σταυρο σου), 'I fuck your God' (Γαμω το θεο σου), 'I fuck your Christ' (Γαμω το Χριστο σου), 'I fuck your Anti-Christ' (Γαμω τον ΑντιΧριστο σου), 'I fuck the priest who baptized you' (Γαμω τον παπα που σε βαφτιζε).

Another instance that shows the extent to which the subject of sex infiltrates everyday language concerns nicknames. Several of the nicknames of village families or individuals have a sexual connotation. A widow is known by the nickname 'the Hot Widow' (καβλοχηρα). A very adulterous woman is referred to by the nickname 'the Hot One' (το Καβλω).

On the other hand, we have a wide repertoire of the so-called 'satiric' songs (σατιρικά) that tackle the subject of sex daringly and jokingly. They originate from the island of Crete, but are well-known throughout all the Aegean islands. In Fourni they are sung, listened to on cassette tapes, and greatly enjoyed (while in other parts of Greece they are unknown and, if known, would probably be considered most shocking).

Quoting such songs would take too much space, so I will mention the theme of only a few of them. One such song tells about a woman scolding her husband for his old age. She tells him he cannot get the thread through the needle any more and cannot find the hole.

Another song talks about a man who suggests to his female neighbour that they do as his rooster does to her hens. In another song, a man asks a woman to put in her tomato while he puts in his cucumber to make a salad. Another song relates the story of Genesis and accounts for female genitals as a mistake on the part of God who dropped a stick and opened a hole in womankind. Another song tells us about a couple playing in bed: a rabbit found a hole and entered and when he came out he had 'drowned'.

People do not avoid sex-implicating talk in front of the children. On the contrary, grown-ups will teach young children sexual jokes and 'dirty' words. Then, they expect the children to repeat these in the presence of others, whereupon everybody is amused and laughs. In that way children are encouraged to participate on a verbal plane in this sex-oriented ideology from a very early age. Even the songs that grandmothers and grandfathers sing to babies and the youngsters mostly involve sexual implications.

For example:



women of the neighbourhood  
cry for his sorrow  
a stick has sprung  
under his navel.

Γελτονισσες, γελτονισσες,  
να κλατε τον καυμο του  
ενα παλουκι φυτρωσε  
κατω απο τον αφαλο του.

Why don't you ask him, young girls,  
what he has in his pants.  
He has two lumps of sugar  
and a bottle of white wine.

Δεν το ρωτατε κοπελλιες  
τι εχει μεσ' την βρακα  
εχει δυο σβωλους ζαχαρη  
και μια μπουκαλα ρακα.

'Dahtirdi' they sang to him  
and they married him  
and they gave him for dowry  
a sack with golden coins  
and they gave him a vineyard  
big enough for a rabbit to enter.

Νταχτιρντι του λεγανε  
και μου το παντρευανε  
και του δινανε προικια  
ενα σακο με φλουρια  
και του δινανε και αμπελι  
να χωρει λαγος να μπαινει.

(In songs the rabbit is always a metaphor of male genitals.)

Sex even transcends kinship boundaries and the incest rule. Sexual affairs between first cousins or between uncle and niece are not uncommon. There have been a few incidents of sexual relations between father-in-law and daughter-in-law and between brother-in-law and sister-in-law. There is one case of incest between brother and sister. I have been told of six cases of incest between father and daughter. Two of them resulted in pregnancy; in the one the girl's mother killed the baby right after birth with an axe, while in the other the baby was raised in the family. These girls have found it difficult to marry. One married a blind old man, the other two married men from other islands, and two others became whores.

It seems there has never been an incidence of incest between mother and son. But perhaps the stories accentuating the arousal of little boys' sexual desires towards their mothers and the emphasis on the care mothers should take to keep physically away from their sons (not to take them into their bed and not to undress in their presence) are signs of a looseness of the incest taboo in this society.

The Fourni people conceptualize kinship as a relationship of belonging (they say 'Kinsmen are people of your own' - συγγενεις ειναι οι δικου σου ανθρωποι) which is based on a blood tie. The distinguishing characteristic of kinship, in their view, is the sharing of the same blood. They accordingly account for the bonds of affection among kin in terms of this metaphor of blood: they say, 'Blood draws together' (τραβαι το αιμα), and 'Blood cannot turn into water' (το αιμα νερο δεν γινεται).

The blood relationships that run through men are attributed a relatively greater importance than the blood relationships through women. A consequence of this belief is that marriage between second cousins patrilineally related is somewhat worse than marriage between second cousins otherwise related. The greater emphasis placed on patrilineal blood relationship is also evident in the village saying that a child may inherit a physical characteristic of a member of the patriline from seven generations back.

In the Greek language the term for incest is a combined word of the lexical constituents 'mix' and 'blood' (αιμομιξια). The Fourni people have there a ready explanation of the 'wrong' ('sin' in the local idiom, but the term does not carry religious inferences for the villagers, and that is why I translate it as 'wrong') attributed to cases of incest. The semantics of incest are already present in the lexical combination that denotes incest. A sexual relation between kinsfolk is the mixing

of the same blood. The negative element in mixing the same blood is pinpointed by these people in the offspring of such a sexual union: a child that will not have pure blood. They believe that incestuous relations give birth to subnormal children ('spastics' and 'monsters', as they say). In the case of incestuous birth among members of the nuclear family, infanticide is immediately practised.

There is only one case of marriage between first cousins. The couple had eight children, three of whom are subnormal. This instance constitutes living proof of the dangers inherent in incest for the Fourni villagers. Another passionate love affair between first cousins was not allowed by the parents to lead to marriage and ended in tragedy; the boy killed his sweetheart rather than lose her to some other man.

As I have already mentioned, in Fourni the reckoning of close kinship extends up to second cousins. Second cousins and the relationship between individuals and the children of their first cousins or the parents of their second cousins form the boundary beyond which marriage is allowed. The marginality of such relationships (whether they are reckoned 'true' kinship or not) is evident in the ambivalent view of marriage between second cousins. Such marriages are often practised, but at the same time there is also often a certain amount of community pressure against it. What shows this ambivalence even more clearly is the community apprehension as to the future of such marital unions. Whenever a misfortune or accident happens in a family where the parents are second cousins, it is immediately regarded as 'punishment' (though again, the use of the term in this context does not carry religious inferences), as proof that marriage between second cousins 'is wrong'.

There are three yearly occasions on which the cultural emphasis the Fourni community accords to sex is ritualized. These are May Day, the four weeks of carnival, and the first Monday of Lent, and the celebration of St. John the 'Klithona' (ὁ Κλειθωνας). From an historical perspective perhaps they are survivals of fertility celebrations of pre-Christian times. From a contextual perspective, they are occasions when the Honour and Shame code dictating modesty in talk and behaviour is temporarily suspended and the local emphasis on sex finds expression in ritual verbal exchange, songs, poems, jokes, dance, and dressing.

During the four weeks of carnival (in February), adults dress up in masquerade and visit friends' and kinsmen's houses. The hosts try to establish their identity and sex and then offer them drinks and ceremonial food.

Carnival masquerading is characterized by reversal of sex roles and suspension of the Honour and Shame code. Men dress up in female clothes, while women dress up in male clothes. A common masquerade is that of a man dressed up as a pregnant woman. A villager used to dress as a dancer in a sultan's harem for ten years in a row. Men masquerading as women imitate the childbirth process: the one pretends to be in labour and the other acts as midwife.

Phallic symbols (sticks, carrots, etc.) and sexual gestures are freely employed at this time. Women dressed up in men's clothes make sexual advances to the hostess and caress her breasts and thighs. The hosts also search the masked visitors bodily, trying to establish their sex - a game that is sexually provocative and, as the villagers say, what makes the masquerade such great fun.

In olden days, the carnival was one of the biggest local celebrations, while nowadays this custom is on the decline. People gathered in the houses of friends and kin every evening to partake of ceremonial food, drink, play cards, sing and dance. On the last Sunday evening, they would dress in their forefathers' local style and dance in the village square until dawn. They also set up a court of law on the beach and judged imaginary cases of theft and adultery and imposed penalties.

On the first Monday of Lent, the ritualized emphasis on sex reaches its climax. Greetings on that day are replaced by the following joking verbal exchange, 'Good Lent'.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| - 'May you have a good time'                 | Καλως να την περασετε                     |
| - 'May it enter you well and come out fine', | Καλως να σας εμπει και καλως να σας εβγει |

the implicit meaning of which is of a sexual nature, where the word 'enters' is employed as a metaphor for sexual intercourse.

On the first Monday of Lent people go on excursions. After eating and drinking, there follow poems, songs and dance, defined by a sex-celebrating spirit, such as:

- |                                 |                             |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. How the young girls grind it | Πως το τριβουν οι κοπελες   |
| how they grind pepper.          | πως το τριβουν το πιπερι.   |
| They grind it with their ass    | Με τον κωλο τους το τριβουν |
| and they spring it.             | και το φιλοπασπαλιζουν.     |
| They grind it with their nose   | Με την μυτη τους το τριβουν |
| and they grind it thin.         | και το φιλοκοπανιζουν.      |

while singing this song, young girls dance and perform the movements dictated by the song.

2. Now in the carnival  
old women 'get hot'  
and on the first Monday of Lent  
cunts have a feast.

Τώρα τις αποκριες  
που καβλωνουν οι γριες  
και την Καθαρα Δευτερα  
κανουν τα μουνια παντιερα.

3. What was it, what was it  
it was not a mouse  
it would enter into holes  
what was it, what was it  
and it entered into holes.

Τι ηταν, μωρε, τι ητανε  
ποντικος δεν ητανε  
μεσ' τις τρυπες τρυπωνε  
τι ηταν, μωρε, τι ητανε  
και στις τρυπες τρυπωνε.

4. The carnival has come  
And brought two sacks of cocks  
and put them in the sitting-room  
and they danced like devils.  
The single girls went  
and took those of second class  
and married women went  
and took the best.  
And a widow, the poor one,  
did not find any left  
and she shakes the sacks  
and there falls one with two ears  
and she says this one is for me  
whose inside thighs are burnt.

'Ηρθαν οι αποκριες  
και φεραν δυο σακια ψωλες  
και τις βαλαν στο σαλονι  
και χορευαν σαν διαβολι.  
Πηγανε οι λευτερες  
και πηραν απ' τις δευτερες.  
και πηγανε κι οι παντρεμενες  
Και πηραν απ' τις διαλεγμενες.  
Και μια χηρα η κακομοιρα  
που δεν προλαβε καμμια  
και τιναζει τα σακια  
και πεφτει μια με δυο αυτια  
και λεει αυτη ειναι για μενα  
πουν' τα σκελια μου καμενα.

Sexual jokes are freely exchanged between men and women on the first Monday of Lent, suspending the Honour and Shame code. For example, some middle-aged men and women were having fun with the following exchange:

'Here come the old men.'

'Go away useless men (σαραβαλα). You are the useless ones.'  
(Implying that their men were impotent.)

'Is your husband useless?'

'No, he is a strong man.'

'Is he a strong man in everything?'

'Yes, in everything.'

Another group of men and women were joking the following way:

'It doesn't get hot at once', a woman said.

'But we want it to get hot at once. In an instant', another said.

'But it does, it does', a man retorted, laughing.

On May Day, strings of flowers and herbs that protect against the Evil Eye, are placed on house doors and boats. People must get up at dawn if they do not want to 'wither away' by May.

On encounters in the streets, the usual greetings are replaced by the joking question, 'Did you grab the May?' The villagers go on excursions to 'grab the May'. 'The May' is a shortened version of the 'May piece of wood' (Μαγτοξυλα), a phallic symbol. Women are supposed to cuddle their husbands' genitals on that morning, a symbolic gesture considered to bring luck. The question 'Did you grab the May?' refers to that. It also refers to the excursions in order to find the May piece of wood. The parallelism of nature and male genitals points to this celebration as being a survival of some old fertility celebration.

On the day of St. John the Klithonas (του Αγιαννη του Κλειδωνα) on 24 June, we have another ritual celebration of a sexual context, fertility

elements again. In the morning the May string of flowers is burnt in the house-yards and people jump over it. Women fetch the 'silent water' from the village spring, i.e., they must not utter a word while carrying the water to their house. In every neighbourhood, people take a small item belonging to them (a watch, a hair-pin, a jewel, a key, etc.) to the house of one woman (chosen at random) and put it in a big jar filled with 'silent water' and covered with a piece of cloth. In the evening, they gather outside the house of that woman and sit around.

The performers are women of middle and old age, while men are only spectators. The woman who has the jar brings it out into the street and places it on the ground in the middle of the surrounding crowd. Without removing the covering piece of cloth, she starts pulling the objects out of the jar one by one. Whenever one of these items is presented, a woman (women take turns in that) recites a poem of a sexual connotation and the people laugh. Each poem is addressed to the owner of that item, but all along his/her identity is not revealed to the crowd.

I have chosen a representative collection of the poems recited on this occasion.

My God, send a rain

and a snow of nuts

and in Helen's backyard

send a rain of cocks and balls.

Βρέξε θεε μου καστανά

και χιονισε καρυδια

και στις Ελενης την αυλη

βρέξε φωλες και αρχιδια.



Your cunt all around  
 has hair like a pig's  
 open up the jar  
 for the Pretty One to come out  
 for the cock to come out  
 with hair like a doll around.

Your cun't tongue  
 kicked my ball.

What should I be,  
 the bottom of your dress  
 to stoop and see  
 the hole of your cunt.

I went around the world  
 and I went to the Holy Mountain.  
 Only then I realized  
 the sweetness of the ass.

If you don't give me cunt  
 let the cats have it.  
 Eat Zagorian  
 300 grams of cock.

Το μουνι σου γυρω-γυρω  
 εχει τριχα σαν του χοιρου  
 ανοιξατε τον κλειδωνα  
 να βγει η Χαριτωμενη  
 να βγει ηψωλη με τα μαλλια  
 σαν κονκλα στολισμενη.

Του μουνιου σου το γλωσσιδι  
 μουδωσε κλωτσια στ' αρχιδι.

Τι ναμουνα, τι ναμουνα,  
 γυρος του φουστανιου σου  
 να εσκυβα να εβλεπα  
 την τρυπα του μουνιου σου.

Σ' ολο τον κοσμο γυρισα  
 επηγα και στο 'Ορος.  
 Μονο τοτε καταλαβα  
 τη γλυκα πουχει ο κωλος.

Εαν δεν μου δωσετε μουνι  
 να σας το φανε οι γατες  
 Αφαγε μια Ζαγοριανη  
 τριακοσιαδραμια πουτσα.

I cannot very well compare the extent and the context of sex-implicating talk between men and women. I have been present at conversations among women exclusively and at conversations among both men and women, but I have no personal experience of sex-implicating conversations among men solely. I was told that men are more uninhibited in discussing personal experiences and intimate details of sexual games, and also that they are more direct in the way they tackle the subject and employ terms that are considered more vulgar in Greek society.

Men and women employ a different lexical repertoire when referring to sex. Men, when in exclusive male company, call the female genitals 'cunt' and 'hole'. They also use the expression 'beautiful cunt' to describe a beautiful woman. And a girl who is not a virgin is called 'one with a hole' (τρουπια). Men, when alone, call male genitals by various terms equivalent to the English cock (καβλι, φωλι, πουτσι). Men, when in the presence of women, usually refer to genitals by the word 'thing' or the neutral pronoun 'it'.

Women mostly use the same terms both in the presence of women only and in the presence of mixed company. More modest women employ only the term 'thing' (πραγμα, μαραφετι) to denote genitals. Other women call male genitals 'the dry' (η ξερη) and both sexes' genitals 'the inside of thighs' (σκελια). A few more outspoken women, when in exclusively female company, may use the more vulgar terms 'cunt' or 'cock'.

The villagers employ distinct lexical items when talking to children or referring to children's genitals. A little boy's genitals are called 'the little bird' (πουδλανι), while a little girl's genitals are called 'the little potato' (πατατακι).

Although in joking verbal exchange and serious discussion on sex, men and women employ a distinct lexical repertoire, in the areas of cursing in a sexual idiom, in poems, songs and anecdotes, there is no differentiation in the phrasing and the lexical items employed by men and women.

These are various terms describing intercourse. There is the expression 'they lie to bed together' (πεφ τουν μαζι) - which is the more mild - the expression 'riding one on another' (καβαλκευονται), and the expression 'falling on each other' (πλακωνονται). Men in exclusive male company also employ the term 'fucking' (γαμω).

Metaphorically, Fourni society views sex as 'eating'. An old man described to me his wife when she was fifteen years old in the following terms: 'She was tender. You could chew her from head to toes' ('Ηταν τρυφερο. Μασσιονταν απο τα νυχια μεχρι την κορυφη). A common expression to refer to an adulterous man is that 'he likes to dampen his piece of bread' (τ' αρεσει να βουταει το φωμακι του). Another expression referring to women that belong to other men says, 'From a pie you don't eat, do not mind if it's burnt' (Απο πιτα που δεν τρως, μην σε νοιαζει κι αν καει). Another expression still tells men that they cannot have a woman who is socially a cut above them: 'This women is not for your teeth' (Αυτη η γυναικα δεν ειναι για τα δοντια σου).

I think that metaphorization of sex as eating shows that the people of Fourni perceive sex as a pleasurable and enjoyable activity. At the same time, it also seem to reveal an asymmetrical relationship in sexual contact. Men are active: they eat. Women are passive: they are the eatable. This notion of inequality between the two sexes in a sexual relationship is not encountered only in this metaphor. My informants tell me that the woman 'gives' while the man 'takes'. However, the

common terms employed to describe sexual intercourse ('lying in bed together', 'riding on each other', 'falling on each other') do not reveal any such element of inequality. My conclusion is that this idea of inequality between man and woman in sexual contact is not absolutely predominant. Perhaps, here again, we have traditions of different origins surviving hand in hand, and merging with the antagonistic nature of the male-female relationship.

In the cases of discussion of marital sexual problems, of mild sexual jokes exchanged among co-villagers, and of the 'anecdotes' with sexual inferences, we notice the Honour and Shame prescription of modesty observances in verbal exchange. That is to say that in mixed company directness and the employment of the terms that are regarded as vulgar in Fourni is consistently avoided. The indirect, inferential way of tackling sexual subjects on such occasions is part of the avoidance rules prescribed by the Fourni idiom of Honour and Shame. We see that these avoidance rules are radically different from what has been reported on other Mediterranean societies. The Fourni avoidance rules do not forbid the discussion of sexual topics between men and women; they only dictate that they are phrased in an indirect way and do not mention a sexual act or sexual part by its name. For example, the man who accused his wife in public that 'hers is too large', as well as the people later repeating that instance, employed a pronoun and not a noun. Again, the woman who jokingly told a man, 'Careful, or I'll catch yours', did the same. This indirectness in speech when referring to sexual matters is regarded by the villagers as an attribution of respect by men towards women and as a demonstration of modesty on the part of women.

In the cases of curses, nicknames, the artistic-recreational area of sex emphasising songs and poems, and the three ritualized occasions of the cultural emphasis on sex (May Day, Carnival and St. John's Day), the Honour and Shame code's dictation of modesty observances is temporarily suspended. These are situations where verbal exchanges have a stereotyped form. Here the references to sexual matters are mostly direct. The villagers consider that by citing such a poem or other stereotyped village saying in its appropriate cultural setting (e.g., sexual poems on the rite of 'laying the bed' preceding a wedding) they do not show disrespect or lack of modesty. As they say, 'the circumstances make allowances' (το επιτρέπεται η περιστάση). In other words, there are institutionalized occasions on which the Honour and Shame rules are temporarily suspended and direct mention of sexual matters is culturally acceptable.

Fourni society puts great emphasis on male sexual potency. The ideological reproduction of the local notions of sexuality starts at a very early age. The grown-ups constantly tease little boys about their genitals while at the same time cuddling them. They ask them what they have in their trousers, jokingly threaten to set fire to them with the lighter, tell them they will cut their 'little bird' with their teeth, ask them how their little 'soldier' is doing, what their 'gun' can do, and so on. In that way they constantly remind little boys of their manliness and make them conscious of their sexual nature and their society's emphasis on male sexual potency.

Girls are similarly awakened from a very early age to realization of their sexual nature. Here the social reminder takes a negative form: girls are constantly told to hide their legs and their genitals. People tease them whenever they pull up their dress or their underwear shows,

instilling in them the notion that the sight of female legs, underwear and genitals is sexually provocative.

The model of the sexual teaching of children reflects the community's ideological perception of sex. Male genitals are auspicious and male sexuality is outspoken. Female genitals are inauspicious and female sexuality is implied. Accordingly, the male sex is aggressive (openly displayed) while the female sex is provocative (to be hidden).

This aggressive aspect of male sexuality is attributed to boys from a very early age. The villagers say that boys are 'dangerous', i.e., that they are sexually oriented from the age of six. Mothers repeat with pride stories that show what their little boys' natural inclination for sex is already awakened. These stories revolve about the boys' desire to cuddle their mothers, kiss them on the mouth and touch their breasts and genitals. Mothers avoid taking boys older than six into their bed, and never undress in front of them.

Sexual urges are a sign of virility and manhood for the male. The cultural emphasis on male sexual potency and sexual performance can be discerned in various instances. On the level of sexual language, we have those 'anecdotes' which through inversion (the exaggeration of male shyness and sexual ignorance) stress the importance of sexual contact. On the level of symbolism encountered at the wedding ceremony, we have the magic of 'binding the groom' (i.e., rendering him impotent on the wedding night) and the precautions taken against it (a pair of scissors under his pillow, and a pair of scissors and a piece of fishing net in his waistcoat pocket). On the level of the ideological reproduction of sexual notions, we have the phenomenon of parents and grandparents praising, cuddling and kissing male babies' genitals, and the stories of little boys' awakening of sexual desire towards their mothers.

c) Violation of the Code of Honour and Shame

Men and women in Fourni seem to share basically the same beliefs on sex, male sexual nature and female sexual nature.

For the people of Fourni, according to the natural law, male sexuality is aggressive, while female sexuality is provocative. Consequently, men are viewed as liable, by nature, to be attracted to women and desire them sexually. 'It is in their nature' (εἰναι στὴ φύση τοὺς), 'It cannot be restrained. No man can be trusted. They may always go with another woman, all of them. That's how all men are made', the villagers say.

Sex is viewed as a natural human feature and as pleasurable for both men and women. The physical need for it is acknowledged in both sexes but to differing degrees. Women are supposed to have lesser physical needs for sex, and, accordingly, to have greater control over them. As their sexuality is of a provocative nature, they can either offer or withhold provocation.

Hence, it seems that male sexuality is conceptualized by reference to the biological level, while female sexuality transcends the biological level and is viewed as subject to social rules.

I would like to stress here that although female sexual needs are considered to be lesser, and therefore controllable, they are by no means considered negligible. Women in Fourni are said to be of an especially hot sexual temperament 'as a result of the large quantities of fish they eat'. It is considered most important for men to know how to please a woman sexually. There have been several instances where an engagement has been broken off because the fiancé was not warm enough.

In adultery, women are always considered the active agents. Man is viewed as liable by nature to female sexual provocation and as unable to restrain his natural inclination. If a woman provokes a man, he cannot hold back. But a man cannot advance on his own initiative. He can communicate in an indirect way his desire for a woman, but, unless she responds positively, he cannot proceed. The decision rests with the woman. For women, sex is not an irresistible natural law. Women are supposed to be capable of controlling their sexual desires. Sexual contact for them is a matter of choice. In that sense, women are themselves the guardians of their sexual virtue.

Of course, according to women the decisive role in adultery is not adequate in itself to give them also the role of guardians of sexual virtue. But as I will explain below, female unchastity does not damage male honour, is not punished or avenged by men, and the responsibility for guarding female sexual virtue does not lie with men either. Women themselves are the decisive actors in adultery, as well as the persons accorded the blame and held responsible for protecting their sexual virtue.

The villagers say that no one can protect a woman's chastity but herself, and when a woman wants to have an affair there is no way to prevent her. 'She will do it even if you lock her up in a match box', they say; or, again, 'She will do it through the keyhole'.

One of the 'anecdotes' I have mentioned illustrates the local notion that female chastity cannot be guarded except by the woman herself. As the story goes, a jealous husband wanted to make sure of his wife's fidelity before leaving on a long sea-trip. So he thought of a cunning trick. He fastened his wife's pubic hair in small knots in such a way as to create a net. On his return, he was glad to find out that the



'net' was still in place. But his female neighbours were laughing behind his back, saying, 'Poor cuckold! You are rejoicing, but they were going in and coming out through the "hairy net"' (αλλα μπαλνοβαλναν μεσα απο την τριχια). This anecdote is often recited when discussing a case of adultery where the cheated husband is ignorant of his wife's infidelity. My informants told me that this story goes to show that whatever one may do, a woman's chastity can never be guarded if she does not want it herself.

Since women are the active initiators in an adulterous affair and the guardians of their sexual virtue, Fourni people also accord the blame for infidelity mostly to them. If the man involved is also married, he shares part of the blame, because he has jeopardised his marriage stability and the cohesion of his nuclear family. If he is single, nobody blames him for seeking to satisfy his sexual needs. The blame falls mainly on the adulterous wife who behaved in 'an inconsiderate way' and 'did not think of her family'.

My data reveal a very high incidence of adultery in the Fourni community. However, adultery is not socially acceptable. It is seen as a threat to family cohesion, and social pressure is exerted to bring it to an end.

Women are supposed to have lesser physical need for sex and, accordingly, if they seek an extra-marital affair during their husband's long absence on a sea-trip, it is regarded as a matter of choice on their part rather than necessity. Men are supposed to be governed by much stronger sexual urges and, hence, having sex with another woman while they are away from home on a long sea-trip (or when their wife rejects their sexual advances) is understandable and acceptable by Fourni

standards - though in practice there is a quite large number of men who remain faithful to their wives during their absences at sea.

However, although a man seeking a one-night fulfilment of his physical need for sex is considered acceptable, a love affair (i.e., the involvement with another woman while the man could satisfy his sexual needs through his wife) is socially unacceptable. In other words, the cultural ethics of Fourni allow men one night's disloyalty only, and that only when they cannot satisfy their sexual hunger within wedlock because they happen to be away from home for a long time or because their wife rejects them in bed.

In practice, as my data reveal, almost all cases of male adultery in the village, in contrast to cases of adultery outside the boundaries of the village (i.e., Fourni seamen on long sea-trips who meet women either aboard the cruise-ships or in foreign ports), are love affairs and not one-night indiscretions. Hence, although at the normative level there seems to be an assertion of greater freedom allowed to the male sex, in reality men are not allowed adultery any more than women are, since adultery on their part usually involves a love affair. In other words, there is a gap between ideals and reality.

Then we encounter another contradiction in the way adultery on the part of men and adultery on the part of women are perceived. My male informants told me that a man who seeks sexual relations outside wedlock 'is only enhancing his manliness' and can boast in the coffeehouse 'on his achievements', while an adulterous woman is only degrading herself and her family and 'becomes a whore'. However, in all cases of adultery on which I have data, the man was criticized, stigmatized, abused and his act was condemned outright.

My guess is that we have here two distinct value systems. On the one hand we have what I would call the coffeehouse ideology: we have male self-imagery which exists and is reproduced in the coffeehouses. Men like to attribute to themselves sexual freedom and the possibility of adultery. For the 'coffeehouse ideology' a man who has an extra-marital affair is proving his male sexual nature and can be proud of himself within the male domain of the coffeehouse.

On the other hand, we have the community and family ideology on adultery. Outside the coffeehouse domain, male adultery is condemned. The community value system does not approve of the breach of family unity, and through gossip, the man is criticized and stigmatized. Similarly, the family ideology does not condone adultery. The rest of the men will not react against the adulterous husband, but his kinsmen will immediately take a stand against him. They will exert pressure on him to end his liaison, will abuse him, and may even hit him.

Ardener (1975) has suggested that in the study of women, the anthropologist ought to look for female 'muted' models that may exist at the same time as dominant models which probably are the androcentric viewpoint solely. It is interesting that in Fourni we encounter instead muted - or at least restricted - models among men. This is the case on male adultery, where men can boast about it among exclusively male company in the coffeehouse, while outside it they conform to the general community condemnation of infidelity. The same happens in the case of gambling, which is negatively viewed by the community value system (shared by both men and women), but is a means of display and self-assertion within the section of the male population that thrives on it within the coffeehouse.

As we have seen, the major part of the blame in a case of adultery falls on the disloyal wife. Female sexuality is supposed to be controllable and female adultery a matter of rational choice, and hence something that could have been avoided. The disloyal wife is first of all 'putting to shame' (ντροπιαζει) her mother and 'putting the horns' (κερατωνει) on her father and brothers. Secondly, she also makes her husband a 'cuckold' (κερατα). Finally, she is conferring a bad reputation on her unmarried brothers and sisters and her own children, jeopardising their marriage chances.

A woman who has committed adultery only once is in time forgiven by the community. But a woman who has had more than one extra-marital affair is stigmatized as 'dragged around' (τραβηγμενη) and more or less considered a tart.

The adulterous man brings 'dropi' upon his mother first of all, but also to the rest of his family. He similarly jeopardises the marriage chances of his unmarried siblings and his children, since the villagers believe that the tendency to unfaithfulness may well run through the whole family.

The mother of an adulterous man or woman is considered largely responsible for his/her deviation. The 'shameless' conduct of the child is perceived as the result of a bad and loose up-bringing. Some women have told me that they 'would rather die than see their children committing adultery'. Consequently, mothers are the actors who will exert the greatest pressure on their children to abandon an adulterous affair.

The father and brother of an adulterous woman are the persons who are most affected after the mother. They become 'cuckolds'. The husband becomes a 'cuckold' too, but to a much lesser degree. The villagers argue that a husband can divorce the adulterous wife and get rid of the 'dropi' she has brought upon him. As they say, a spouse is a 'patch' (μπαλ) and 'it can be pulled off' (by separating), but for the parents and the siblings the 'blackening' (η μουτζαλια) stays.

This is a point of major significance. It is a point on which the perception of Honour and Shame in Fourni is differentiated from other Christian Mediterranean societies where the primary cuckold is considered to be the husband.

The fact that the father and brothers are the primary cuckolds in cases of female adultery relates to the feature of matrifocality. In societies where the wife loosens her ties with her parental family upon marriage, and becomes a member of her husband's kindred, her infidelity reflects directly on her husband. But in Fourni the wife retains very strong affiliations with her parental family and even pulls her husband away from his own kin. It is this situation that the view of 'the spouse being a patch' expresses. It stresses that the wife does not become a member of the man's kindred as well as that the husband does not become a member of the woman's kindred. Within marriage, men and women retain a certain individual autonomy versus each other. The wife does not necessarily have to account to her husband and the husband does not necessarily have to account to his wife. But, because of matrifocality, each has to account to their mothers. This is why, as I have already said, the person most affected by either male or female adultery is the actor's mother.

There are two points in which the perception of the effects of adultery in Fourni differs from other Mediterranean societies. The one point concerns the perception of the cuckold as a man on whom an adulterous woman puts the horns. Anthropological studies on Honour and Shame have reported that in the Mediterranean the horns are associated with goats. But in Fourni, there is no such association. The cuckold is metaphorically compared to a deer. They say, 'That woman would have made you look like a deer', by which they imply that the woman would have so many extra-marital affairs that she would not put only one horn onto her husband but as many as the various branches of the deer's antlers. In contrast, the billy-goat (the goat that most usually has horns) is metaphorically associated with strong sexual drive, i.e., the very opposite of a cuckold. 'You got a son, you got a goat', is a common village saying ('Εκανες γιο, εκανες τραγι).

What is most surprising though is the notion that cuckolding is not a state attributed to men only. A woman who is cheated by her husband is similarly a cuckold (κερατωμενη). There is even a proverb on this point:

When your husband becomes too affectionate

It means that the horns beget branches.

(Οταν ο αντρας σου σου κανει πολλα χαδια,  
ειναι που τα κερατα βγαζουν περικοκλαδια.)

The other point on which the perception of the effects of adultery in Fourni differs from other Mediterranean societies as presented in anthropological studies has to do with the distinction between 'timi' and 'dropi'. In Fourni, the adulterous woman does not dishonour her male kin and her husband. Instead, she brings 'dropi' on them (τους ντροπιαζει). The term 'dishonoured' does not exist. There is only the term 'atimos/atimi' which applies to both the adulterous man and the adulterous woman.

At the same time, shame as the state of a person having committed adultery, is not an exclusively female attribute either. Men are also said to be 'xethiandropi', as well as 'to feel ashamed' quite often on such an occasion.

It seems that in this society we do not have a clear-cut correspondence between men and honour on the one hand, and between women and shame on the other. This again (just like the previous points on cuckolding) ties up, I believe, with the feature of matrifocality and the absence of male domination.

A liaison between a married woman and a married man cannot be kept secret. Sooner or later, someone will see the adulterous man entering or leaving the woman's house, and the news will spread very fast throughout the whole village. The families of the adulterous man and woman are the last to find out what is going on. People will talk behind their backs for quite some time before anyone takes the courage to tell them the bad news. The very last persons to hear it are usually the husband of the adulterous woman and the wife of the adulterous man. Sometimes even their own mothers may know but not tell them out of fear of hurting them. There have been several occasions where the mother-in-law shields her daughter-in-law in front of her son, while at the same time she has set in motion the 'pressure machine' for making the adulterous wife give up her extra-marital affair. Mothers-in-law who have 'opened their child's eyes' (as the local expression goes) are considered especially hard women. The villagers criticize a certain woman as a very authoritarian mother-in-law and, in justification of their view, they mention the time she burst into the house of one of her daughters-in-law and caught her in bed with some other man.

Usually, upon the discovery of an adulterous affair, there is no physical violence displayed on the part of male kin. As the parental family of the adulterous woman says, nothing can be gained by beating her up; the 'blackening' can not be removed. The husband never hits his unfaithful wife, on the one hand out of fear that she might then abandon him for good, and on the other because he is expected to display coolness and pride.

Although we do not have physical violence on the part of men upon the discovery of adultery (as we have in other Mediterranean communities), we often have physical violence on the part of women. The female members of the parental family of the adulterous man may seek out the woman he had the affair with and attack her, pulling her hair. As an old woman, whose son had been found out a few days ago to be carrying on an extra-marital affair, said to me, 'We have a court of our own here. We won't let that woman go unpunished, because she is the one to blame. It is she that took my son's brains away'.

Fourni society is not characterized by the employment of physical violence by male relatives as the normative answer to infidelity. The idea of a 'crime of honour' is totally strange to these people. There are, however, a few instances of random individual violence. In one case, the three brothers-in-law of an adulterous husband beat him up so badly that they broke his ribs. In another case, a husband broke a bottle on the head of his wife's lover. In another case, a wife tried to stab her adulterous husband with a kitchen knife in a coffeehouse (for which act the villagers applauded her). During the time of my fieldwork, a boy of sixteen attacked his mother's lover with a knife, and after a fight the boy was taken to hospital badly bruised.



Similarly, although the husband of an adulterous wife is expected to behave with coolness out of pride, there have been instances where the husband has broken down and reacted in what are considered ridiculous ways. One husband, upon catching his wife in bed with another man, ran to the churchyard and started ringing the church bell. Another husband, who has been driven crazy by his wife's repeated adulteries, has withdrawn into himself and has become a drunkard.

The institutionalized reaction to adultery is the exertion of pressure by kin on both the adulterous actors in order to stop their affair. The starting of gossip is similarly an indirect pressuring mechanism on the part of the whole community. The primary pressure group consists of the female members of the parental family of each adulterous actor. Just as women themselves are regarded as the guardians of their sexual virtue, it is the women again who are the more active agents in the exertion of pressure for the resolution of adulterous affairs.

The purpose of exerting pressure is to make adulterous actors return to their spouses and save their marriages. Marriage and offspring are the higher value for the community of Fourni. Divorce is unacceptable. There have been only four cases of divorce in this society's history. As the local saying goes, 'Divorce is xethiandropo'. Adultery may happen, but it is not allowed to go so far as to break the ideal state of marriage. Even if the adulterous affair has resulted in a pregnancy, there is no case for divorce. In two cases, the adulterous women killed the bastard babies. But I have been told of eight cases where illegitimate children have been brought up as true children of the husband of an adulterous women. An old woman who died recently and is said to have been very beautiful, had four bastards from four different fathers. The villagers do know they

are bastards because of their great facial resemblance to their adulterous mother's lovers. In one of these cases the husband beat up his wife badly on discovering that she had given birth to a child by another man, but he finally accepted the bastard and is treating him like his own son. Only once (about sixty years ago) has there been a divorce on account of an illegitimate child. Whatever the circumstances and the relationship between husband and wife, the society of Fourni does not accept the dissolution of wedlock.

During my fieldwork, there was a famous Greek film on television relating the story of a whore who chose her independence over marriage to the man she loved. All the villagers I asked on the subject were outraged. They thought of the film as 'dirty' (ποοστυχο) for rejecting the ideal of marriage.

The villagers were similarly outraged by the recent law the government issued on divorce. The law dropped the formulation of adultery as a criminal offence and hence as adequate grounds for divorce. 'So, now, anyone can cheat and not be caught for it. Now adultery will be free. Nothing can stop it any more.' In Fourni, divorce is employed as a threat to discourage adultery. In a few cases, a wife has gone so far as to visit the local policeman and state she wants a divorce, in a last effort to force her husband to give up an adulterous affair. But things never get any further. People think of divorce and use it as a threat. It is a major means of exerting pressure for the very reason that it is socially condemned and everyone wants to be saved such a 'dropi'.

In reviewing the data, we see that the perception of woman as the guardian of her sexual virtue in Fourni makes for a situation quite different

from that reported by anthropologists in other Christian Mediterranean societies. Female adultery affects primarily her parental family and only secondarily her husband. Her deeds do not dishonour anyone but herself (she becomes 'atimi'), but bring 'dropi' upon her kin. The husband does not seek revenge; rather, he seems to be a neutral agent, expected only to keep his pride by not expressing sorrow or anger. Physical violence is employed only by the adulterous man's kinswomen against the woman he had the affair with. The adulterous woman is the person to blame most (because she is the one upon whom the final decision for starting an affair depends), and consequently the person to punish. But her own family does not punish her: her action has brought 'dropi' upon their name, but punishing her will not remove the 'dropi'. The resolution of adulterous affairs is pursued by means of a pressure-exerting mechanism, in which it is female kin that figure as the most active agents. In facing an instance of adultery, the considerations are not how to take revenge upon lost honour. Rather, the considerations are how to bring the adulterous actors and their spouses back together and keep their marriages going.

The high concern of this society with the problem of marital infidelity finds expression at the symbolic level in the stories about nereids (stories narrated by men and women similarly).

Nereids are mythical creatures, which appear at night-time and hide away at day-time. They are very beautiful young women with horse or goat legs, and they love singing and dancing. Their appearance is often associated with water locations - springs and wells.

The nereid stories are supposed to be true stories that have happened to specific village men. The central theme that repeats itself in all

the versions of nereid stories has to do with the seduction and abduction of a man by the nereids. Nereids are female creatures and hence want a husband and children. Since there are no male nereids, they seek for a husband among humans. They whisk them away and make children with them, the so-called nereid-children that are not human. Their victims, however, are not simply men but always married men. That little detail reveals the core of these stories as being the theme of marriage and adultery. When we extract the variants of which these stories consist, we are always left with one invariable constituent: nereids are females that steal other women's husbands. In that sense, nereids are females threatening marital stability and the institution of marriage.

A most fascinating version of the nereid stories replaces the female nereid with a female bear. The same pattern is then repeated. The bear steals away a man, keeps him as her prisoner by licking his feet to make them soft so that he cannot walk, then takes him as her husband, gives birth to a human boy, and, when the man is discovered and rescued by other villagers, she grasps the baby, tears him in two halves, and throws one half in the sea and the other on the mountain.

From a social contextual viewpoint of analysis, the myth of the nereids emphasises the threat that the high incidence of adultery poses to this society. The nereids steal other women's husbands. The nereids threaten women in their role as wives. The problem posed concerns the vulnerability and fragility of the marriage institution. And it finds expression through a negative stereotyping of female sexuality.

But if we look beyond the level of the obvious reference of the myth of nereids to this society's problem with adultery, we can discern an underlying level which has to do with the power relations between the

sexes within the marriage structure. As Gluckman (1965) says, mystical beliefs in feminine evil mask basic conflicts in women's social position; he attributes anxiety about female sexuality to the real disruptive role of women in the social system.

On that underlying level, the myth of the nereids reveals a struggle for power between husband and wife, a struggle that threatens marital stability and may well find an outlet in adultery. This struggle for power does not simply concern the everyday aspect of marital roles, though. It also projects the power struggle between two traditions. On the one hand we have a patriarchal tradition that some of the first settlers in Fourni brought along from their countries of origin (as I have mentioned elsewhere, some of the first settlers came from mainland Greece). On the other hand, we have a matrifocal tradition that another part of the first settlers (those who came from the Aegean islands) brought along. These two traditions have come into conflict in the new-born community of Fourni - a conflict that was translated into a power struggle between men and woman and symbolically reproduced in the nereid stories.

The people who narrated nereid stories to me belonged to the older generation. Also, these specific men that were said to have been abducted by nereids are all very old men. The younger people (younger than forty-five) never mentioned the topic to me on their own, and did not seem too interested in the subject when I raised it. For me, this is evidence of a declining trend in the belief of the myth of the nereids, a point that seems to sustain further my hypothesis that these myths have also functioned as a 'language' of the power struggle between a patriarchal and a matrifocal tradition in the past.

Extra-marital affairs before marriage are not so stigmatized as adultery. The majority of young girls have sexual relations with their husbands during the courting and engagement period. A frequent occurrence is that the young girl gets pregnant and the couple is hurriedly wed. In case of pregnancy of an unmarried girl, the young man responsible for it is immediately forced by both his own and the girl's kin to 'undertake his responsibilities' (ν' αναλαβει τις ευθυνες του), as the villagers put it, even if he did not intend that particular girl to become his wife. In either case, the loss of virginity before marriage is not a moral offence calling for punishment of the girl or the seeking of revenge.

The villagers told me that in olden days, girls were virgins on their wedding day, unlike what happens nowadays. I cannot know whether this is a factual statement or the statement of an ideal. The case remains that at the time of my field work, sexual contact before marriage seemed to be the rule rather than the exception. In many cases, the husband has not been the only sexual partner of a girl before marriage either. Girls have boy-friends whose existence they keep secret from their parents, and even engagements are frequently broken.

However, girls who have had more than a couple of affairs jeopardise their chances of marrying. Young men fear they may prove unfaithful wives. Also, marriage to a girl who 'has drawn herself around' (τραβηγμενη) would lower the groom's family's esteem. Young girls who have had many affairs actually find it hard to marry a village man. Usually they marry men from outside the community.

Love is a sentiment praised and respected by Fourni people. Marriage for love is the ideal, though not always the case. Girls and boys get married at a very early age. The girls marry between the ages of fourteen

and nineteen, and boys between nineteen and twenty-four. A girl who reaches the age of twenty and is still single is regarded as a spinster. Usually, in such cases, she is for some reason (moral or other) considered an undesirable bride and has to look for a husband outside the community.

In about half the cases, it seems that young girls and boys marry after infatuation either on both sides or on the side of the man only. In the other half of the cases, marriage is by arrangement, i.e., when in-laws approve of the alliance and the boy and girl meet and decide they like each other. The villagers prefer marriage for love, but they say that marriages by arrangement are more stable.

A young girl and a young boy may become infatuated but their parents (or the parents of one of them) may disapprove of such a marriage. Mothers start looking for an appropriate spouse for their children as soon as they reach puberty, and consequently try to influence them in favour of such a marriage. They put a lot of time, energy and effort into marrying their children to partners of their own choice. Quite often they succeed. There are many people of both sexes who are unhappy at not having married their sweethearts and having accepted a spouse of their mother's choice.

However, a number of young people insist on marrying for love. The institutionalized way out in such situations is elopement. The young couple run off together to a relative's house, or a chapel, and spend the night together. In that way they are considered to become husband and wife, a situation that cannot be altered. The parents get furious, but have to accept the irrevocable significance of elopement. The young couple from that day onwards live together as husband and wife, and as soon as possible they are wed in the chapel of the Cross.

Elopement does not bring 'dropi' to either the spouses or their families. It is objectionable to their families because it shows in public that their child has gone against their own will. The rest of the villagers rejoice and respect elopement as proof of the greatness and power of love.

Elopement is the institutionalized way of escaping parental pressure (and maternal pressure in particular, since it is mothers who have the active role in the choice of an appropriate spouse for their children). The families of eloping young people exhibit reluctant consent. If they wished, they could find their child and bring him/her back home early that night before elopement became a fact. Hence, although they feel rejected they do not deny elopement as the institutional way for young lovers to make their own marriage choice.

Elopement does not only signify the granting of independence to young people to marry against their family's wishes. It further signifies the lesser degree of male domination in this community. A girl, by elopement, can choose her own mate, without being restrained by a father's or a brother's code of honour as in other Mediterranean communities.

The space symbolism relating to elopement seems to reflect the local conceptualization of elopement as acceptable but still not the prescribed cultural norm. A wedding following elopement does not usually take place in the village church of St. Nikolas (i.e., the church at the centre of the village), but in the chapel of the Cross which is situated in the south-western outskirts of the village (i.e., at the margins of the village). Probably this space symbolism expresses the community view of elopement as a marginal option in contrast to the view of the formal engagement to marriage (which involves parental consent and the agreement



of the families to be thus allied) as the main option, as consent to the community norm.

Love is conceived and experienced as burning, all-consuming passion. It takes hold of a person and makes one powerless and weak, 'deaf and blind', 'victim of love' (θύμα του ερωτα). Love transcends the borderline of Honour and Shame. A young man in love puts away his 'egoismos' and a young girl in love ignores the rules of proper modest conduct. The villagers often use the term 'sevda' (of Turkish derivation) that denotes burning passion.

This conception of love finds expression in (and, at the same time, is reproduced by) a certain type of love song that has been brought on cassettes by young sailors. They are songs that dramatize the burning and suffering of love. Young men and girls in love put on their cassette recorders so loudly that at least half the village hears, so as to make sure that the object of their love also hears the songs they dedicate to him/her.

Although love is conceptualized, expressed and experienced most dramatically, it is not thought to be a long-lasting emotion. After marriage, love soon fades away in the everyday routine and marital friction.

The villagers never talk of love with reference to married people. Love is not an emotion accorded to husband and wife. As they say, 'Now, the honey has been consumed' (τώρα σωθηκε το μελι). Love is understood only as great passion, and as such only outside wedlock.

Although marriage brings an end to the experience of the passion of love between husband and wife, it does not also bring an end to its experience for each of them individually. After marriage, there starts a second round in the search for love and passion, a round that leads to adultery. All cases of adultery in the village seem to be cases of

great infatuation. There are seven cases known to me where an adulterous affair has lasted for over fifteen years. There are also five cases of villagers who, after the age of fifty, abandoned their spouses for a lover. There is a case of suicide by a middle-aged married man caused by his unreciprocated love for a married woman, and a case of attempted suicide by a young married woman after breaking off an adulterous love affair.

d) Gossip

As we have seen so far, deviation from the village ideal moral system is quite common. But that does not make it any the less a deviation, nor is it allowed to undermine the community ethics. There exists a social mechanism that constantly emphasises and reinforces the moral values of this society, including (and especially) moral values concerning sexual matters. This is the mechanism of gossip.

Gossip is a major feature of village life in Fourni. Detailed news of each household's happenings is within a very short time common knowledge for the whole community.

Everybody seems to know every little detail about other people's lives. There are no secrets, since as soon as the secret is said to a friend or a relative, the whole village gets to know about it. The notion of privacy is practically unknown. Doors are kept open and there is a constant coming-and-going of kin and others. People are used to talking loudly and some neighbour will happen to be close enough to hear. But most of all, Fourni villagers are not self-contained people. They cannot keep their troubles to themselves, they have to pour them out. And family

troubles are always news, which rapidly gets around. In the process, people pronounce criticisms and judgments, and the actual words and facts are twisted around: the mechanism of gossip is set off.

Gossip is a regulative mechanism of human behaviour, and specifically a mechanism for repressing individual personality in accordance with community norms. In this society there is no room for individual free will, as understood in Western society. The pattern of people's lives is dictated by the community's norms and standards. People, from early childhood, learn to adjust their manners and actions in accordance with 'what people will say'. Deviation from the prescribed pattern of behaviour, in major and minor matters alike, is unacceptable. And it is precisely because it relies on enforcing a collective morality on the individual, that gossip is such an effective regulator of social behaviour.

'I would rather die than do so-and-so' (Καλλίτερα να πεθάνω παρά...), people used to say when the prospect of a deviation from the social norm (and hence the imminent prospect of being subjected to gossip) was presented to them. Or, 'My children had better kill me before they do so-and-so'. The threat of gossip forces people to abide by the community prescriptions of how one should live and act. 'We live for esteem' (Για μίαν υποληψη ζουμε), they say. This notion of esteem, which refers to one's social image, is the backbone of the mechanism of gossip. Gossip threatens one's esteem in the community. To avoid gossip and ensure one's esteem, one has to conform to the village norms, because, as the villagers say, 'Better lose your eye than your name' (Καλλίτερα να σου βγει το ματι, παρά το ονομα).

The fact that in a small isolated society news about other people's behaviour provides a major source of topics for discussion, does not provide

a full account of the phenomenon, in view of its extent and predominant role in village life. Rather, we would say that gossip functions as a major regulative and coercive mechanism in the organization of social behaviour in this community. It is the mechanism for the reproduction of social morality and consent to village norms. It is the mechanism of reproduction of the collective moral conscience.

Fourni society is a society where the concept of individual behaviour is regulated by the notion of one's moral reputation (ipolipsi), which is a notion that imposes conformity to community norms and values, leaving no place for free will and independent action. The individual's internalized system of values coincides with the community's system of values.

The ideational schema governing people's actions and behaviour is as follows:

Dropi ———> filotimo ———< ipolipsi

Dropi ———> timi ———> ipolipsi.

'Dropi' is what makes one conform to the socially correct and act on the basis of 'filotimo' and 'timi'. What makes one have 'filotimo' and 'timi' is one's feeling of 'dropi'. Concern with one's own 'ipolipsi' depends on one's 'filotimo' and 'timi', which in their turn depend on one's sense of 'dropi'.

Gossip circulates the appropriate information around the village. In that way any deviation from or outside the normal event gets to be known by everybody. Then there follows the spreading out of the community verdict, and the imposing of a penalty (by isolating the guilty party), when judged necessary.

Gossip constitutes the vehicle for moralizing on all issues, and hence reinstating and promoting the village ethics.

In that way, gossip sustains a specific moral complex and punishes all deviations from it. It offers support to the victims of antisocial behaviour and punishes the individual who breaches the social code. Because of its foundation on collective judgment and collective action/pressure, it is an exceptionally effective device for reinforcement of the communal ethic.

Gossip is by no means limited to the female world. Men gossip just as much - a point that further supports the view of gossip as the institutionalized reinstatement of community values.

e) Sex Segregation

Another area of relevance to the idiom of Honour and Shame is the principle of sex segregation. The segregation of the sexes into two distinct domains - the domestic and the public - in the Mediterranean has been consistently associated with the control of female chastity, and its symbolic expression in conservative female clothing and avoidance prescriptions have been identified with the complex of Honour and Shame.

In Fourni, we do not encounter a strict sex segregation principle. Rather, sex segregation is of a conventional type, relating to the sexual division of labour and the consequent separate recreational spaces allotted to men and women. Women spend most of their day-time at home, and socialize mostly in that same domain. Men spend most of their day-time around the harbour and the coffeehouses, and the fish storage-rooms nearby.

The village streets are a space shared by the two sexes. Men and women socialize freely in the streets on their way to various errands. Shops are not a female area primarily, as in some other Mediterranean societies. Shopping is by no means an exclusively female activity either,

men do a lot of shopping for their families. Also, a number of men frequent shops simply to chat with male shop-proprietors.

The domestic domain (that is, the houses) is the primary female area for work and recreation, as I said. But it is not subject to any strict sex segregation principle. Men, when at home, socialize with the women that may visit their wives and daughters instead of hurrying to leave the house on account of a visitor of the other sex. Similarly, a man who wants to see another man on some business matter may well visit him at his house in the evening when men gather with their families.

The only case where a strict segregation principle applies is when one man and one woman, unrelated to each other, meet alone in a closed space, for example, a house. The villagers argue that since the interests and discussion topics of the two sexes differ greatly (unless it is a man and a woman with close kinship ties, in which case they may discuss some family problem) in such an instance it is most probable that the encounter has a sexual purpose. In the open air though, this sex segregation principle does not hold: a man and a woman, unrelated by kinship ties, may (and do) exchange brief, friendly chit-chat without people attributing any immoral purpose to their encounter.

As the domestic domain is a primary female domain, correspondingly the coffeehouses and the harbour are the primary male domain of work and recreation. But here again we do not encounter the strict rules of female exclusion reported for other Greek communities. Especially lately, there seems to be an increasing tendency for a transcendence of the coffee-house as a male domain. In summer, women join their husbands or fathers in the evenings to drink 'ouzo' in small groups of friends (παρεες). Also, women whose husbands are especially prone to heavy drinking, accompany

them most often to the coffeehouse in the evenings, with the purpose of 'looking after them', as they say.

Again, a woman may go to the coffeehouses looking for her husband if she has an important reason: if she especially needs him at home, if she has heard that he is drinking heavily, or gambling. In such cases, a woman rarely leaves the coffeehouse without having accomplished her purpose, as I have already explained in the previous chapter.

As for the harbour again, it is by no means an exclusively male domain. Women keep coming and going according to the sailing of boats. Some bring food to their husbands; some take away their dirty clothes and boat linen for washing; some go to welcome kin returning from a trip or to receive a parcel; female shopkeepers carry their merchandise from the boats to their stores, and so on. Even the sight of a woman untying the moorings of a boat before sailing is not uncommon.

In brief, we see that social interaction rules concerning the two sexes in Fourni are apparently dramatically different from most of the Mediterranean communities as presented by anthropological studies.

As I have discussed in the previous chapter, women are not secluded in the domestic domain and have a considerable share in community life. In olden times all women participated in the sphere of production, and nowadays, a good number of them still engage in the production and commercial spheres. They also own property: they own most of the house property in the village and sometimes they also own productive property such as fields, stores, and in exceptional cases they even own a share in a fishing- or commercial boat.

At the same time, women have the greater part of the responsibility for the material welfare of their family: control over the spending of

the family income and over saving money, house-building, collecting of daughters' trousseaux and furnishing of dowry houses, deciding and supervising children's education, and choice of spouses for them.

Their responsibilities for the material welfare of their family take them out of the limited confines of the domestic domain and allow them to mix with builders and craftsmen, commercial boat-owners, bank representatives that visit the island, school-teachers, and also allow them to travel to the nearby large islands or Piraeus to engage in purchases of housing equipment.

In other words, their roles and responsibilities extend far beyond the boundaries of the domestic domain and involve them in social activities which have been reported for other Mediterranean communities as belonging to the male or public domain. Women in Fourni society customarily perform activities that would be incompatible with strict sex segregation rules.

### Conclusion

In reviewing our data, we see that we have a community in which various interrelated components combine in the manifestation of a code of Honour and Shame that diverges from the form which some anthropologists (Schneider, 1971; Blok, 1980; Pitt-Rivers, 1977; Peristiany, 1966) have suggested as typical throughout the Mediterranean peasant communities.

In Fourni, we encounter an emphasis on the notion 'love of honour' (filotimo) rather than on 'honour'. At the same time, 'dropi' and cuckolding are notions attributed to both sexes. There are no strict sex segregation rules and the phenomenon of female seclusion or female restriction within the domestic domain is totally alien. Sex is viewed as a pleasurable and desirable pursuit for both sexes and is not surrounded



by pollution ideas or taboos. There is an especially stressed positive emphasis on sex. Premarital sex is common practice. Adultery is also quite frequent and is not violently punished; instead, social pressure is exerted in an effort to bring adulterous affairs to an end and get the spouses back together. Gossip is an additional pressure-exerting device that plays a major role in the prevention and putting down of extra-marital relationships. Objection to a particular love affair ending up in marriage is overcome by institutionalized elopement.

These interrelated components add up to a particular code of Honour and Shame which we could classify as rather loose in comparison to the anthropological studies of other Greek and Christian Mediterranean communities. This looseness of the Honour and Shame notions is evident in the absence of any ritual or magical sanctions or of a normative system rooted in religion and evoking and reinforcing the conceptualization of Honour and Shame.

However, there is research on Honour and Shame that has come out with evidence of a similar nature to our data in Fourni. Dubisch (1972) reports that in the Aegean island of Tinos, the value system differs from the classical case of the Greek Sarakatsani (Campbell, 1964) in the use of the term 'love of honour' instead of 'honour' and the meaning distinction involved, in the lack of a sharp sex-linked behavioural dichotomy in defining honour, a lesser emphasis on male protection of female chastity, lesser importance of fighting and vengeance and physical strength, and greater emphasis on co-operation and mutual aid in village life.

It seems to me that there has been a tendency for all-embracing generalizations on the anthropological literature on Honour and Shame in the Mediterranean.

Certain social features (competitiveness between male household heads, the role of women as scarce resources, dependence of a man's honour on the shame of the women closely related to him, association of avoidance rules between the sexes and male authority, Honour and Shame as an ideological mechanism aiming at the solidarity of the family group under the strain of social fragmentation, etc.), have been assumed as the unchanging constituent components of the idiom of Honour and Shame throughout Mediterranean peasant communities.

The well-developed theoretical framework for the understanding of Honour and Shame (Campbell, 1964; Peristiany, 1976; Pitt-Rivers, 1977; Antoun, 1968; Blok, 1980; Schneider, 1971; Papanek, 1973; Jacobson, 1970) has dominated anthropological thought to such an extent that it has prevented the perception of different manifestations of the phenomenon in a number of Mediterranean communities.

I believe that the assertion of a cultural unity in the Mediterranean code of Honour and Shame is rather problematic. I think that Honour and Shame may involve distinct variables and be manifested in different ways in different cultural contexts. And we need to concentrate on such differences and relate them to their social context if we want to overcome the false coherence which has resulted from the predominance of the study of Honour and Shame among highly competitive societies and the generalizations drawn from them.

If we compare the community of Fourni to other Mediterranean communities studied by anthropologists, we see that they differ in cultural context and social organization, which is exactly the reason why they also differ in the manifestation of Honour and Shame. The societies, from the study of which the theoretical model for the understanding of Honour and Shame

developed, are characterized by high competition for scarce resources and the dependence of prestige and the protection of property on physical strength in the absence of centralized authority. As Schneider (1971) put it, honour is the ideology of a property-holding group which struggles to define, enlarge and protect its patrimony in a competitive arena; the focus of honour is women, for women are a convenient symbol around which to organize solidary groups.

The case of Fourni, though, is quite different. Here we have a society that started from scratch and until very recently faced extreme poverty. The arid and rocky island made agriculture totally unprofitable (if not almost impossible) and, at the same time, the first inhabitants lacked the means, capital and know-how to exploit the surrounding sea. Accordingly, we could not talk of competition for scarce resources; there cannot be competition for non-existent resources. Similarly, they did not have any significant property that would need to be protected or enlarged. Economic development started in around 1950, and even then, for about half of the population (those employed in the merchant marine) it did not take the form of property ownership (i.e., ownership of means of production), but of monetary income. And as for the other half of the population, those engaged in fishing, their acquisition of property (boats) did not involve them in a field of competition, as fishing does not entail competition for scarce resources. Obviously, under the circumstances, we could not have an ideology (in the manifestation of a certain form of Honour and Shame) specific to a competitive property-holding group.

Fourni also differs from other Mediterranean communities studied by anthropologists in another aspect of social organization. It is not characterized by patriarchal relations. At the time of the formation

of this society, a tradition of patriarchal origins and a tradition characterized by matrifocality came to clash. In time, the matrifocal tradition gained ground. Anthropologists have reported an association of avoidance rules between the sexes and male authority throughout the Mediterranean. It certainly does not seem that a pure form of male authority has ever existed in Fourni. In consequence, there is limited emphasis on the dependence of a man's honour on the shame of the women closely related to him, in contrast to other Mediterranean societies.

There is a third aspect in which Fourni social organization differs from the Mediterranean communities on which we have anthropological reports. This concerns the social position of women. In Fourni, women are vested with a considerable number of obligations and responsibilities which are often accorded to men in other Mediterranean communities. These obligations and responsibilities surpass domestic boundaries and involve women in what is traditionally considered the public domain. (I will not expand on this point here as I have discussed it often before.) Accordingly, there are no strict sex segregation rules or female seclusion within the domestic domain.

To sum up, I have argued, on the evidence from Fourni, against the anthropological hypothesis of the cultural unity of the Mediterranean and the theoretical framework that associates a certain set of social variables with the idiom of Honour and Shame. I have suggested instead that Honour and Shame may involve different variables and assume different forms and functions in different cultural contexts.

Fourni is such a case: a different cultural context and social organization have contributed to the manifestation of a different code of Honour and Shame. I have isolated certain social constraints which I

consider as relating to this difference in the form and functions of Honour and Shame in Fourni. These social constraints are the absence of competitive property-holding groups, the tendency to matrifocality, and the social position of women regarding the distinction between the domestic and public domains.

I would also venture to suggest that future research on this subject in the other Aegean islands may probably come out with evidence similar to that from Fourni (as has Dubisch's study of the island of Tinos). My guess, on the basis of anthropological reports on the social organization of other Aegean islands (Kenna, 1970, 1971, 1976; Vernier, 1977, 1984; Kapetanaki, 1980; Bernard, 1967, 1970, 1972, 1976; Casselbery Valavanes, 1976; Petronoti, 1980; Hoffman, 1971, 1976; Herzfeld, 1976, 1980a, b, c, 1982, 1983; Stott, 1973, 1985) is that the Aegean area presents structural features that are more or less similar to the social constraints I have singled out as relevant for the particular manifestation of Honour and Shame in Fourni. It remains to be seen, through research, whether the code of Honour and Shame in the Aegean is actually different from other Mediterranean communities studied, and whether such a difference is related to social constraints similar to those in Fourni.

## CHAPTER FOUR

RELIGION - THE GREAT TRADITIONa) Symbolic Systems in Fourni

Religion in Fourni is a vital and integral part of community life. It constitutes a most rich and diverse field of beliefs, rites and practices. What is more, it is not a separate, self-contained sphere, but merges into everyday life and many aspects of other social activities.

I engaged in the study of religion in Fourni with two starting points. First, that just as Turney has shown that symbols ought to be examined both in terms of their meaning and in terms of their function, in the same way symbolic systems as wholes should also be considered both from the viewpoint of meaning and the viewpoint of function. Secondly, I assume that religion should not be used as a cover-term, but the way it is articulated to the overall social organization and the particular functions it assumes should be specified in any given society or cultural area.

Historical research (Pantazopoulos, 1967; Frazee, 1969, 1979; Vakalopoulos, 1976) has shown that in Greece the Orthodox Church, ever since its foundation in the Byzantine Empire, has had orientation and strivings of a political nature. It has functioned as a rival, challenging force to the state power, and not as a predominantly religious institution.

The roots of the Greek Orthodox Church are to be found in the formation of the Byzantine Empire, which enlisted the support of the then blossoming Christian religion to its own political purposes. The Byzantine Empire became a religion-sanctioned state, and its unity was expressed by the principle: One God, one Church, one King.

During the years of subjection to the Ottoman state (1453-1821), the clergy functioned as the political head of the subject Greeks, intruding in all spheres of secular life. The Greek Patriarch was officially ordained 'Millet-Baschi' or 'Ethnarch' (i.e., national leader). And the Church became the political, judicial and administrative apparatus of the Greeks, and the mediator between them and the Ottoman authorities.

After the 1821 independence, the new state sought exclusive power. In 1833, the Church agreed to a constitution removing the patriarch from headship of the nation. Ever since, the Church has been occupied in the unsuccessful struggle to regain its supreme political authority over the nation. During the period of the military junta (1967-1974), it found some of its old power and prestige, in exchange for the political support it offered to the dictatorship. Ever since, it has been on a path of firm, gradual decline.

This historical survey leads to a sociological distinction crucial for the understanding of religion in Greece. It is the distinction between the institution of the Church and folk religion. And it relates to two other distinctions; between the national and the local level, and between a secular and a sacred aspect in religion correspondingly.

The correlation between Church and secularity and between folk religion and sacredness is a gross simplification, not valid in itself, but I employ it to point out the real, although complex, differentiation between Church and folk religion. The Church does not involve a sacred aspect unquestioningly, but its political orientation and strivings throughout Greek history have pushed it to predominantly secular functions. In juxtaposition we encounter a far more prominent manifestation of the sacred aspect of religion within another area: the folk religion. A significant

point is that until World War II, all life-cycle rites were performed within the household and not in church. The shift of the ceremonial place from the household to church corresponds with the recent intrusion of the state in all the functions of the domestic domain.

Rather schematically, we could say that at one side there is the Church with an eminently secular, political orientation. At the other side, there is the folk religion with its particularistic elements in every community. And in between the two there is an area of interaction from which the Church derives a field for exercising authority and justifying its existence.

The analytical distinction between the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition has been employed in the anthropological discourse on world religions. It has served to distinguish between an 'orthodox' realm of religious practices and beliefs, and a 'popular' and 'peripheral' realm of religious practices and beliefs.

The employment of this distinction in the analysis of religion, although significant and useful as an analytic guide, has tended to oversimplify the complexity of each such tradition and to overstress their separation. It has also been associated with some problematic dichotomies, such as between literate and illiterate, urban and rural, intellectual and emotional, public and private, male and female.

The distinction between universalistic and particularistic elements in world religions is, however, generally accepted. The shift towards a preference for these terms relates to a recent effort to overcome the oversimplification, separateness and misleading associations of the Great and the Little Traditions. Richard and Nancy Tapper (1987) have argued for the importance of research in the practice and meaning of ordinary,



day-to-day practised Islam, which inevitably combines both 'orthodox' and 'popular' elements.

The issue of universalistic and particularistic elements (or of a Great and a Little Tradition) in Greek Orthodox Christian religion, has not yet been studied or discussed to any significant extent as yet. The only relevant discussion I know of is Kokosalakis's argument on a fusion of popular and official religion in Greece (1987).

In my examination of the male-female relationship in relation to the sphere of religion in Fourni, I have chosen to employ the Great and the Little Tradition dichotomy. I am aware of the problems which may accompany the employment of this dichotomy in the appreciation of the complex overlapping of these two traditions. I should make it clear that Fourni people themselves do not make such a distinction. Far from suggesting a clear-cut distinction, I instead believe that the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition are in a constant process of merging into each other. In spite of that, I have decided to employ this dichotomy: (1) because the universalistic and the particularistic elements of the Greek Orthodox religion merge in distinct ways in the various rural communities and urban centres, and (2) because the particularistic elements in Fourni are to a large extent unique and specific to this community (though some of them are found in the same form in other Greek communities too).

The consideration of the merging of the universalistic and particularistic elements of the Greek Orthodox Christian religion in Fourni (and a comparison with that merging in other Greek communities) is in itself a large issue which I do not undertake here. I confine my discussion on this point to outlining that we notice a process of inclusive phases whereby the Great Tradition is adapted in different cultural settings,

fusing every time with particularistic religious elements, and hence is re-elaborated in a new form that accommodates together elements of the Great Tradition and popular religious practices and beliefs.

Considering the Christian Great Tradition from an historical perspective, we see that it does not have the same form in the society and time period from which it emerged (i.e., the Jewish society of almost two thousand years ago), and in a given rural community of today (for example, in Fourni). As the Christian religion spread out and was adopted by European and other countries, it has undergone a great deal of change and adaptation to the different historical and cultural settings (see M. Warner's very fine illustration of the fact in the cult of the Virgin Mary, 1978). In its introduction and adaptation to new socio-historical settings, the Christian religion fused with a variety of folk religious practices and beliefs (which quite often originated from other religious systems). In that way, we have a series of inclusive phases, at the level of each one of which the Great Tradition merges with and incorporates particularistic religious elements. The first inclusive phase in which the Christian Great Tradition is adopted by, and adapted to Greek society, was the acknowledgement of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire by St. Constantine. A second inclusive phase was at the separation of the Orthodox Church in the eighth century. Other inclusive phases can be pinpointed at the level of community: the Christian Great Tradition encounters and merges with particularistic elements that form part of the cultural tradition of rural regions or individual communities.

In that sense, we can never speak of a pure Great Tradition. On the contrary, the re-elaboration to which it is subjected at every inclusive phase makes it a mixture of universalistic and particularistic elements.

But for the very reason that we have a series of inclusive phases, in every specific cultural setting there is a Great Tradition, which on the one hand has already been re-elaborated to accommodate particularistic elements in a previous cultural setting, and on the other hand is under the process of incorporating particularistic elements of the new cultural setting. In other words, on every occasion we have a Great Tradition, which is not pure but a fusion of elements of the Great Tradition and of some particular Little Tradition, but at the same time stands separate vis-à-vis another particular Little Tradition, with which it is under the process of fusion to produce the ordinary, day-to-day practised religion of the specific community.

It is in that sense that I employ the Great and Little Tradition dichotomy in my discussion of Fourni religion. The Great Tradition is not viewed as the 'orthodox' or 'authentic' version of religious practices and beliefs, but rather as a realm of universalistic features which, adapted in a given community, will be re-elaborated and united with a set of folk beliefs and practices particular to that community. It is accordingly extremely difficult (and an oversimplification) for the anthropologist to distinguish between the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition in any given society, since the fusion process is already partly in the past. Still, every time, there is also a body of practices and beliefs that is obviously particular to that community (probably because we have not proceeded to a next phase of inclusion where the fusion would not be obvious any more) and which we can identify as the Little Tradition.

In brief, I employ the distinction between the Great and Little Traditions in the following way:

By Great Tradition I refer to those universalistic religious elements that are more or less similar throughout the Greek society and are

related to church functions (church rituals, and the religious calendar).

By Little Tradition I refer to those particularistic religious elements that differ among regions or individual communities, and are therefore specific to those communities.

The Great Tradition can be said to stem from the clergy and the church doctrine, although it has also embraced and incorporated elements of folk religious beliefs and practices. The Little Tradition can be said to stem from cultural traditions independent of Christianity, and in that sense it can be said to stem from the body of the devotees.

In Fourni, we encounter a Great Tradition that the first settlers brought along from their places of origin, and which is already a fusion of universalistic and particularistic elements, and which, adapting to the social idiosyncracies of Fourni society, took an individual local form sustained by the native interpretation and local customs. At the same time, we encounter a Little Tradition which consists of religious beliefs and practices which have been elaborated within the community of Fourni and are therefore specific to that community, and which are probably the outcome of a merging of various cultural traditions, either related or independent of Christianity, which were also brought along by the first settlers from their places of origin.

Apart from the sphere of Christian religious beliefs and practices, in Fourni we also encounter a somewhat distinct sphere in which people confront the supernatural. I am referring to that sphere as a field of magical beliefs, practices and rites. There is no clear boundary between what I call religious and what I call magical beliefs and practices. Both are symbolic systems structuring practices and beliefs which typify human action towards society and nature. The Fourni people themselves

do not differentiate between the two. For them, the Great Tradition, the Little Tradition and magic constitute a continuum in their effort to grasp, to render meaningful, to accept and to intervene in natural events (especially the mystery of life and death) and their unpredictability.

I suggest that the main difference between the religious sphere and what I call the magic sphere lies in that each corresponds to a different stage of historical evolution and a different type of social organization. The emergence and domination of religious Great Traditions was not automatically followed by complete obliteration of historically precedent symbolic systems. In the Mediterranean area of our days, we encounter a variety of elements which were part of older magical and religious systems and which co-exist with, and are even incorporated by the dominant Great Traditions. For example, in rural Greece, we encounter on the one hand the Christian tradition, and on the other hand, beliefs of agricultural fertility magic and elements from the ancient Greek religion. However, these elements are not differentiated by the people and merge together in the formation of their cultural tradition.

Another difference between what I call the religious sphere and the magical sphere is that they involve different conceptualizations of the supernatural. The supernatural in religion (i.e., the deities) is conceptualized as distant and acting from outside the social reality, while the supernatural in magic is conceptualized as residing within the things that constitute the social and the natural world.

Yet another difference is in ways of communicating and interacting between the supernatural and the human. In religion, there are representatives of the deities (e.g., the priest) and their mediatory role is highly emphasized, while in magic interaction between the supernatural

and the human is much more direct and there is no necessity for mediation (though, of course, there are often ritual specialists in some realms).

What is most difficult is to distinguish between Little Traditions and magic. They often appear to draw upon very similar, if not the same, symbolic schemas. The difficulty, in my opinion, lies in the fact that Little Traditions are the areas in which elements of Great Traditions and elements from other symbolic traditions (past religious beliefs and magical beliefs) merge together, thus for example, in the Fourni Little Tradition the supernatural in the form of saints is conceptualized simultaneously as a distant, external force and as a force residing within social reality (a force identified with a particular icon, for example). We might say, rather schematically (although this involves an oversimplification of their complexity) that Little Traditions derive their main themes and symbols from Christianity, but their conceptualization of the supernatural and their way of interaction with it derive from magic.

Hence, my presentation of the material on Fourni follows a distinction between three symbolic systems: the Great Tradition, the Little Tradition and magic. Under magic I present that part of beliefs, practices and rites which does not (at least directly) relate to the Christian conceptualization of the supernatural, but instead involves a different conceptualization of supernatural forces and a different way of interaction between the human and these supernatural forces. Still, such a distinction is very difficult, as the elements of the Great Tradition, those of the Little Tradition, and those of magic merge together in a most complex way to produce the Fourni community's total cultural tradition. This constant merging of elements of different symbolic systems makes extremely difficult the classification of certain sets of beliefs, practices and rites under one heading rather than another.

b) Devotional Places and the Representative of God

In the middle of the village, there stands the church of St. Nikolas (built before 1900, since the older villagers remember it from their childhood) where regular masses and rituals are performed. It is noticeable that the saint to whom the main church of the village is dedicated is the patron saint of sailors all over Greece. In the far north end of the village, on the way up to the hills, there stands the Church of the Holy Trinity (built in 1930) and its cemetery.

On the hills surrounding the village there are fourteen chapels, where a mass is performed only on their saint's day or on special request by some villager. These chapels offer the locus for a more personal interaction of individuals with the supernatural (i.e., without the intermission of the priest).

Several older women have undertaken the care of keeping these chapels clean and lighting their oil-lamps (κωντηλια) regularly.

In addition, there are numerous shrines dedicated to saints, Christ and the Virgin Mary on the outskirts of the paths up the surrounding hills. Also, several chapels are dispersed all around the island.

Shrines (ikonostasia, proskinitaria) are described by the Fourni people as miniature chapels. They are supposed to have the same function as chapels, but are so much smaller than them because the villager who had them built could not afford the heavy financial expenditure required for the building of a chapel. People passing by such shrines may light the oil-lamp or a candle and put money in a small box in the shrine. The money is collected by the priest, who is supposed to save it for the purpose of building a chapel at the shrine's location one day, as has recently occurred since my fieldwork in one such case, St. Andreas. The villager

who has had a shrine built, takes regular care of it if it is situated within the village. The shrines outside the village are kept clean and their oil-lamps lit by people passing by.

There are two local priests. One is the Reverend Manolis, who is the religious functionary of Fourni, and priest in the church of St. Nikolas. The other, the Reverend Markos, is priest for the two other villages of the island, but he also helps the priest of St. Nikolas at major celebrations and rituals. Priests in Fourni wear the usual long black robe and black hat of the Orthodox Church, clothing that differentiates them from the villagers.

Their role as religious functionaries does not give them any kind of power (political or otherwise) beyond the boundaries of the churchyard. They are not concerned with the social happenings of the village, and have no authority to pronounce judgment on breaches of the ethical code of the community. They are solely church functionaries without any further authority in community matters or in events affecting the life of individual villagers. The title of the priest is also extended to his wife; the priest is called and addressed as 'papas' (i.e., reverend), and his wife 'papathia' (i.e., a grammatical form that denotes her sex).

The ideal picture of the priest requires that he be calm and modest, restrained in character and in his behaviour, so that he can be respectable and respected. The Reverend Markos, though, is a radical deviation from that ideal and does not command the people's respect. The villagers criticize him for his fervour in discussing politics, his reputation as a womanizer, his drinking habits, his cunning manners and his love of gossip. He himself seems to take his role rather lightly,



and sometimes even makes jokes on religious matters. Apparently, he regards his position simply as a means to earn his living rather than as some special social function.

In the Christian Orthodox tradition, the priest is the representative of God on earth and the mediator between him and the devotees. In that role he is supposed to act as the recipient of confession of sins. However, in the community of Fourni, the priest is not in the eyes of the villagers a sacred and unworldly enough person to be entrusted with the secrets of their private lives.

'He may gossip. We do not trust him', the villagers explain. I should note here that in the Christian Orthodox Church, the devotee's identity is not concealed from the priest-confessor. There are no special cubicles for that purpose, and confession is made face to face. Hence, the villagers never go for confession to the local priests, and, in that sense, we might say that the feature of confession is absent in the religious realm of Fourni.

Still, there is one exception to this generalization. When a stranger priest happens to visit the community of Fourni, the female villagers (though never the men) are willing to go to confession to him. However, even in that case, they believe that they do not entrust the visiting priest with a truthful confession of their sins. The impression I gained from my discussion on the subject is that the Fourni people view confession mainly as the formal means for obtaining absolution. What I am trying to stress is that although they regard confession as the way for taking absolution, they do not accept that that confession ought be truthful and accurate. They will twist facts around the way it suits them and will omit major sins from their confession (e.g., an adulterous

woman will never acknowledge her adultery in her confession). Hence, I would say that confession is by no means an integral part of the religious life in Fourni.

Because of his religious functions, the priest is both benevolent (as a representative of God on earth) and dangerous. Encountering him on your way to some important business may bring bad luck. Fishermen starting on a sea trip are especially superstitious on that score. Often, if something goes wrong, people will say, 'As if I had met a priest!'. Accordingly, fishermen starting on a trip (and also men starting off hunting - a leisure pursuit) will postpone it if they encounter a priest before setting out.

The priest is assisted in his religious functions by certain lay persons. These are the candle-lighter (a female), the chanter, the man who carries the censer while the priest performs some ritual, and a few young boys (aged from eight to fourteen) who are called 'papathopethia' (literally, 'the priest's children') and carry the winged-cherubim icons (εξαπτερυγα) while the priest performs some church service, or accompany him carrying church icons around the village for a Blessing Rite. The chanter, the candle-lighter, and the man carrying the censer take these roles by inclination at some point in middle-age and keep them for life. The candle-lighter receives a salary from the state, just like the priest. But then her duties are not occasional like the others, for she is responsible for the general upkeep of the church on a daily basis and for assisting the priest at the Sunday mass and the daily evening church service (εσπερινος).

Church attendance is not a major feature of this community's religious life. The majority of the people go to church during Holy Week, on

Christmas Eve, on the celebration of the Virgin Mary (15 August), on Epiphany (6 January), on the four Fridays of the Lent period, and on the celebration of the island's major saints.

Only a few older women attend the Sunday mass and the daily evening church service. A few more women go to the morning liturgy on the celebration of close relatives' saints' days, and only for saints whose name is borne by some villager; there is not church service on the day of a saint whose name is not to be found in the repertoire of village names.

The church is also full at weddings and baptisms (attendance at which, however, nowadays requires an invitation by the family sponsoring the ritual) and at funerals (where no invitation is required and attendance is a display of respect to the deceased and his/her family).

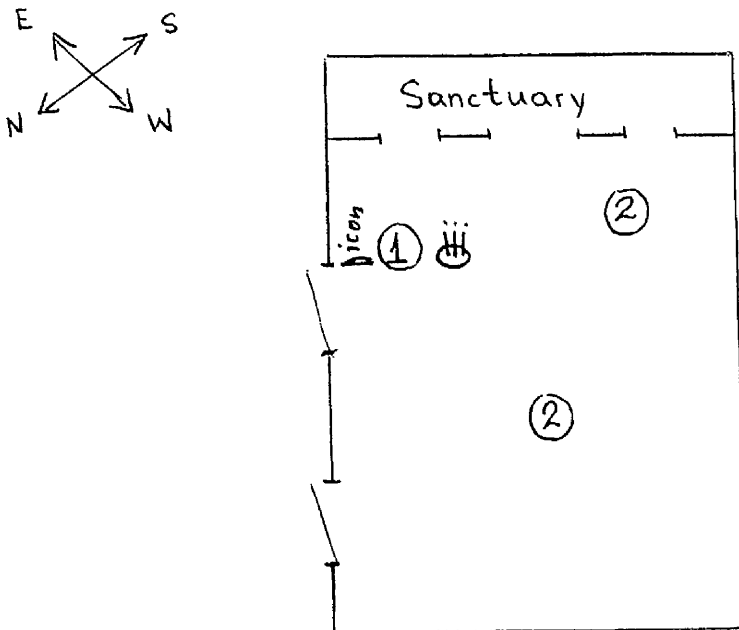
Church attendance is not only a sacred matter. Nowadays, it has an emphatically secular character, too. It is an occasion for a communal gathering, a major opportunity for women to display smart dresses.

The priest's sermon and his reading of the Holy Bible is in Ancient Greek and is not understood by the people. During the church service, there is always a lot of movement and noise in the church. The women greet each other cheerfully, chat and gossip among themselves, and generally seem to show very little respect or religious feelings towards the mass or ritual performed. The children keep going in and out, creating havoc in the front part of the church. The priest often has to interrupt his duties to ask for some quietness and attention to the church service. But it is a hopeless effort. The attendants' minds are diverted to more worldly affairs, as their eyes wander around inspecting smart dresses and hairstyles. I should note that men

display more solemn behaviour, though when asked, they acknowledge that they do not follow the priest's sermon. The church may be a holy place, the 'house of God' as they often say, but to them it is also clearly a place for social gathering and entertainment.

The space inside the church is divided into sections. The congregation occupies specific sections of the church during services. These sections are distinguished by imaginary lines.

The typical spatial allocation of the Greek Orthodox Church follows the plan below. The sanctuary (including an altar) faces the east, and the entrance faces the west. Entering the church, there is an 'in between' space, the narthex (1) which separates the outside world from the sacred church domain. This space is distinguished from the section occupied by the congregation (2) by a pair of icons and a candle-holder - one on the left and one on the right.



Plan of Church of St. Nikolas

The church of St. Nikolas faces south-east (a slight deviation from the eastern orientation of the altar in other Christian churches), and the entrance faces north-east (not west), and is situated at the side instead of the back of the church.

Men and younger women enter the church through the main door. Middle-aged and elderly women enter from the rear door. It is significant to note that the rear door is also used by persons supposed to be in a state of impurity, as for example women who have given birth and go to church on the fortieth day after birth for a purification rite.

On entering, people buy a candle, light it and then proceed in front of the icon of St. Nikolas, cross themselves and kiss the icon.

Men occupy the front part of the church, while women occupy the rear. The separation line is set by the main door and the icon of St. Nikolas. The majority of children stand at the very front part of the church, often restricting to a minimum the space in front of the sanctuary, where the priest performs; but then children also move freely around the rest of the church. At the back of the church there is a staircase leading to a balcony above the section occupied by women. That balcony is also occupied by women and children mainly when the church is full up, or otherwise by women who do not feel smartly dressed enough to join the others. In a sense that balcony constitutes an informal part of the church. The women there do not stand up at the reading of the Gospel, and do not keep the upright posture with the hands crossed in front of them. They lean over the balcony, watch the crowd below and chat a great deal among themselves. It is somehow as if they were a kind of audience to some event rather than an integral part of the congregation.

c) Religious Celebrations

The Great Tradition in Fourni centres on the church, church celebrations, and church rites. This involves a number of celebrations and saints' days based on the Orthodox Christian calendar, the rituals of marriage, baptism and death, purifying rites, blessing rites, and 'request' rites performed by the priest, Communion and fasting on holy days.

1. The Orthodox Religious Calendar

The major saint's celebration is that of St. John on 7 January. The celebration takes place in the neighbouring village of Thimena. The people go over there as for an excursion, and spend the whole day or a couple of days there. There is a morning church service at the church of St. John, and in the evening there is a fiesta with drinking and dancing.

The second major saint's celebration is that of St. Minas on 11 November. The villagers go to a site where there is a chapel dedicated to St. Minas (about an hour's trip by boat), and after the church service they have a fiesta in the open country.

There are big fiestas also on the days of the celebration of St. George (at Thimena, 23 April), St. Nikolas (the local church, 6 December), and on Good Friday when the Assumption (Κοίμηση) of the Virgin Mary is celebrated in the village Chrysomilia.

Today, at these fiestas, every 'parea' (group of friends who go together to the fiesta) faces the expense of eating and drinking separately. But my informants say that in the past (up to World War II), the evening fiesta consisted of the custom of ceremonial communal sharing of food. All the villagers contributed according to their means, but shared the

food equally. The ceremonial foods on such occasions were lamb and milk products. I would think that this custom of communal sharing of food corresponded to very similar phenomena to those reported by anthropologists in other 'simple' societies. It was an occasion for redistribution in an economy where meat and milk products are scarce goods. And the occasion for such redistribution and communal sharing is provided by the religious calendar.

As I have already mentioned, the saints' days corresponding to the repertoire of names in the village are also celebrated in a minor way. These saints' days are usually the occasion for a celebration and fiesta among kinsmen.

Major religious occasions are also Epiphany (6 January), and the day of celebration of Orthodox Christianity (7 March).

On the day of Epiphany, after a morning mass, the priest starts for the seashore for a purification rite. In front of him go the 'papathopethia' carrying the cherubim icons, and after him come the church attendants. Following the recital of the chosen section of the gospel for the purification rite at the seashore, the priest throws a cross into the water and several young men dive in to compete in retrieving the cross from the deep.

On the celebration of Orthodox Christianity, the church icons are carried to the seashore, after the morning mass. The procession consists of the 'papathopethia' carrying the cherubim, the priest, some villagers holding the icons, and the rest of the church attendants. The priest recites an 'invocation' by the seashore, and then the icons are taken for a brief tour through the village streets and finally are returned to the church.

## 2. Religious Rites

A purification rite (Αγιάσμος) is performed whenever a house is built, a boat is put into the sea for the first time, or a field is put to cultivation. Also it may be performed when people move to a new house or buy a new boat. A purification rite is also performed regularly in every house on the eve of Epiphany.

On all those occasions, the priest visits the house, boat or site, recites the appropriate passage from the Bible, and sprinkles Holy Water around (i.e., water kept in the sanctuary and blessed during a secret rite there by the priest).

On Epiphany all female household heads take Holy Water from the church, sprinkle it in their homes, make the family members drink some, and keep the rest for whenever the need may arise. Such a case may be when there is bad will among the family members or one of them is taken ill suddenly.

A blessing rite (ευχελαιο) is performed when a household is going through some crisis. Its purpose is to 'chase the evil away', the Fourniotes say. A case that calls for a Blessing Rite may be some fierce family quarrel, a severe or sudden illness, or the suspicion of ill-intended gossip (γλωσσοφαγία) affecting the family. In brief, the female household head may ask for a Blessing Rite when she wants to put an end to some domestic crisis that proves beyond her own powers, and hence divine intervention is required. The priest comes to the house and performs the rite, this time employing Holy Oil instead of Holy Water as a purifying means. A Blessing Rite is more powerful than a Purifying Rite, according to the villagers. A Purifying Rite is asked for simply in order to ensure the presence of good, and in that sense it is of a preventive nature, while a Blessing Rite is asked for in order actually to chase the evil away.



The Blessing Rite is also regularly performed in all households every year at the celebration of Epiphany and on Easter Wednesday. In that case, the purpose is to safeguard the house against the possible presence of evil, i.e., its purpose is rather preventive, like the Purifying Rite.

Similarly, every household asks for either a Blessing Rite or a Purifying Rite on a Wednesday or a Friday of Lent.

The 'Request' Rites (Παρακλήσεις) are exclusively asked for by women. They take a ceremonial loaf, oil and candles to the church, and pay the priest money to make a 'request' to God on their behalf. The request may be for the resting in peace of the soul of some deceased relative, or it may be to show repentance for a specific sin committed (a most common reason to ask repentance in that way is having had an abortion), or it may be for asking pardon for one's sins in general (this last type of request usually being asked for by old women).

These 'Request' Rites are called 'Sarantari' (Σαρανταρι) which means forty days. That is because they may be performed any day after the morning mass during a period of forty days before Christmas, another period of forty days before Easter and a period of fifteen days before the celebration of the Virgin Mary on 15 August. The person who has asked for the rite needs not be present at church when the priest makes the 'request'.

Holy Communion is a regular feature of the local religious life centring around church, too. We should note, though, that for Orthodox Christians, Communion does not have the paramount character it has assumed in Catholicism.

Adults ideally take Communion on Thursday before Christmas, on Holy Thursday and on the celebration of the Virgin Mary on 15 August. Before partaking in Communion, the devotee ought to be spiritually cleansed. That is the purpose of confession, but, as I have already mentioned, the villagers do not consider the local priests unworldly enough to entrust them with their personal thoughts and sins.

Hence, the villagers, out of fear of gossip, abstain from confession before taking Communion. But they have adopted another way for ensuring their spiritual cleansing for the purpose of Communion. They take precautions to avoid any quarrel or bad feelings during the preceding couple of weeks, so as to have a 'clean soul' before Communion as they say. And the day before taking Communion, they ask for forgiveness from their parents and parents-in-law on any grudge they may hold against them.

In practice, however, people do not take Communion very often. It is mostly children as well as older people approaching the end of their life that fill up the church for communion on the dates mentioned above. Also, the number of women taking Communion is dramatically larger than that of men.

Children are taken for Communion as soon as they are baptized. The rule is that they should be taken for communion three Sundays running after the day of their baptism. Thereafter, they should take Communion once a month ideally, though actually they do so on major Holy Days only.

Fasting is held by the Orthodox doctrine as one more way of preparation and physical cleansing for religious celebrations. The villagers of Fourni adhere greatly to this practice, although, as I will discuss later on, they ignore the reasoning behind it.

The local ideal rule dictates fasting on all Wednesdays and Fridays, and my informants tell me that in earlier times they abided by that rule. Nowadays, the occasions for fasting are a few days before the celebration of the Virgin on 15 August, the celebration of Christmas and more importantly the Easter celebration. Some women also fast on certain dates on account of some relevant vow they have made.

During Holy week, people abstain from protein food and, from Holy Thursday onwards, from oil too. Holy Week is the culmination of the fasting period which lasts throughout all of Lent, though only on Wednesdays and Fridays. After the Resurrection, at midnight on the Vigil of Easter, regular eating is resumed. The Easter Lamb compensates for the long period of abstinence from meat.

Fasting is fully observed by women. Men are not very keen on fasting, at least not before Holy Thursday. However, cooking is a female affair and hence men cannot but abide; even so, they will not refrain from the occasional fish or octopus-on-the-coals at the coffeehouse. Children up to the age of ten are not forced into fasting, though the household cooking of course affects their diet during Holy Week.

Fasting (νηστεία) is accompanied by abstinence from sex, which they call fasting too. Having sex on Holy Thursday or Good Friday is regarded as one of the gravest sins. Men comply even more reluctantly with that part of the fasting, and often will not comply at all. Every woman has a history of fierce fights with her husband over that subject.

For Orthodox Christianity, and for the Fourni Great Tradition, there are three major religious celebrations: Christmas, Easter and the Virgin Mary celebration on 15 August.

Easter is the major and most elaborate religious celebration in Fourni. I have left it last in this discussion of the various components of the Great Tradition in this society (i.e., church, church celebrations and church rites), because I wish to discuss it at some length, as it is the one occasion involving major church attendance and also participation of the devotees beyond the mere act of attendance. The overwhelming majority of the villagers go to church for five days in a row. The number of men attending church is noticeably smaller than that of women, but that does not relate directly to their piety. By that time of the year, a considerable portion of the male population has already left for the seven-months' employment on cruise boats.

First, I will look briefly into some parts of the church services during Holy Week. My aim is not any full description of the service itself (a point which concerns some more general study of Christian religion), but rather a description of the occasions on which we observe participation of the people beyond the mere act of attendance.

On Wednesday evening, the church is filled by around 160 persons: 100 women, ten men and fifty children. The priest reads six Lessons from the Gospels. While he reads a Lesson, the congregation stands up and listens carefully, although the Ancient Greek in which the Lesson is recited is incomprehensible to them. In the interval between the Lessons they resume their usual habit of greeting each other and chatting cheerfully. As always, there is a lot of noise and the usual distraction of the minds from the church service. At the end of the service, all the people in the church kneel on the floor for a genuflection (though a few old women may do so several times also during the Lessons). Then, they walk by a table put in the middle of the front part of the church

(moving from right to left in front of the table) and the priest anoints them: they kiss the cross he holds in his left hand and he makes the sign of the cross on their foreheads with a stick moistened with Holy Oil.

On Holy Thursday, there is a morning mass which is attended by a crowd of around 100 to 150 people (50 to 70 women, 30 children, and 20 to 30 men). After the church service, the people take communion. Many people (especially women with young children) come at the time the mass finishes for the purpose of taking communion.

In the evening, the congregation reaches about 250 persons - 150 women, 50 men and 50 children. The priest recites five Lessons. At around 1030 pm, a big wooden carving of Christ on the Cross is brought out of the sanctuary by the priest, as the chanter and three young boys ('papathopethia') dressed in white church uniform come out of the two side doors of the sanctuary. The candle-lighter brings the censer (θυμιατο) out of the sanctuary and gives it to a male villager who has performed that task of carrying the censer for years. A process is formed: the priest in front holding the Crucified Christ, then the chanter, the three boys, and last the man holding the censer. They walk in a circle in the middle of the front part of the church, the priest and the chanter singing alternatively. Then the carving of Christ is placed in the middle of that imaginary circle. The young men from the attending crowd rush up to it and hang wreaths of flowers on it. It is a most enjoyable time for everyone, as the young men always rush before the appropriate time, and others shout, 'It's not time yet!', 'Do not hurry', 'We'll all get there in time', and 'It doesn't matter who puts a wreath on first'. There is much noise from the voices, a lot of giggling and general chaos. The priest, discouraged after several attempts to calm the crowd, retreats

in front of the altar. When the wreaths have been hung on the Crucified Christ, the people present pass by the carving, kiss Christ's body ('προσκύνημα' - an expression of homage) and make the sign of the cross. Soon afterwards the church is almost empty, the attraction of that evening's service having ended. Only a few older women stay on until the end of the service at midnight.

Groups of men and women start for an all-night excursion to chapels on distant spots of the island. They go on foot or by boat, singing hymns all the way there, and come back to the village at dawn. This excursion derives from the Christian custom of an all-night vigil in homage to Christ in memory of the Lord's Supper (Μυστικό Δείπνο), but has assumed a more secular character in Fourni.

On Good Friday morning, while the priest has gone to a memorial service at the cemetery, several young and middle-aged women clean the church and decorate the catafalque, the representation of Christ's tomb, decorated with flowers. Young mothers bring their children and make them go under the catafalque, an act which ensures Christ's blessing for the little ones.

At the noon church service, the congregation consists almost exclusively of women and children. Towards the end of the service, a procession is formed: first goes the man holding the censer, walking backwards and facing the priest who comes next, then come six young girls in black dresses and black veils bearing the Myron, and finally three young boys (papathopethia) holding the cherubim. The girls and the priest hold over their heads a thick piece of cloth with a painting of the body of Christ. The girls carry baskets with holy Myrons.

The holy Myron refers to some perfumed oil that was employed, probably for ritual occasions, in Jewish society at the time of Christ's life on earth. Mary Magdalene is said to have cleansed Christ's feet with Myron, and at His death women carried pots of Myron to wash His body. The Fourni villagers collect the flowers from the catafalque on Holy Sunday, and keep them in the house icon-stand 'for the goodness' (για το καλο), i.e., for household protection, and also to use to cure the Evil Eye.

The procession goes around the catafalque three times. Then the priest places the cloth with the painting of Christ's body on the catafalque. The girls cover it with the Myrons (actually, they are ordinary leaves but are supposed to be Myron for the occasion), and sit by the corners of the catafalque (supposedly crying for Christ's crucifixion, like the Myron-bearing women), while the attending women and children come and kiss the piece of cloth on the catafalque (again, an expression of homage to Christ).

On the evening of Good Friday, the church is crowded (around 70 men and 80 women) and a great number of people have to stand outside in the churchyard. Young women (irrespective of marital status) stand close to the altar and sing the 'praise' hymns (εγκωμια). Then four young men raise the catafalque on their shoulders and take it outside the church. A procession is immediately formed: three to six young boys (papatheopethia) carrying the cherubim in front, then the priest and the chanter, then the men holding the catafalque, and finally the congregation. After circling the church three times, the procession heads for the seashore through the village's main street. There the priest says a short blessing prayer, and the procession returns to the church. On the way back, they

stop at every store and the priest repeats the same short blessing prayer. On returning to the church, the crowd departs, and only a few older women stay until the end of the church service.

On the evening of the Vigil of Easter, the whole village goes to the church a little while before midnight to celebrate the Resurrection of Christ and to fetch the 'Holy Light'; they light their candles and take them home to make the sign of cross by means of their smoke on the house's front door - so as to ensure the blessing of the house. There is no special participation by the villagers in the church service though, apart from the usual man carrying the censer and the young boys carrying the cherubim as the priest goes out and into the churchyard to sing the chant 'Christ is risen' at midnight.

However, the people are not content to celebrate the Resurrection only by a church service. At midnight, on the very instant the priest starts singing 'Christ is risen', there follows an outburst of gunfire, explosions of dynamite and firecrackers. On a slope of the hills surrounding the village, two heaps of branches (one about 4 metres high, the other 7-8 metres) are set alight. That part of the celebration of Easter is prepared and performed by young men and children.

On Easter Sunday, people go to the church for the service of the 'Second Resurrection' at noon. Very few attend the mass; the majority stay in the churchyard and in the street. At the end of the mass, young boys start dynamite explosions on a hill very close to the church (a distance of 100 metres) and the crowd gathers in groups to admire the spectacle. In the churchyard, a scarecrow (stuffed clothes in the shape of a boy, just like the English 'guy') is hung on a tree and set on fire. That represents Judas and his burning (his punishment by the watching



crowd) is one of the major attractions of Holy Week. The stuffed scarecrow is made by the same women, year after year.

d) Ideological-Reproduction of the Great Tradition

We will now turn to another aspect of religion, namely the ideological reproduction of the religious beliefs sustaining the Great Tradition. We will look into the local interpretation of the Orthodox Church doctrine and its transmission from one generation to another.

Fourni is an Orthodox Christian community, like the rest of Greece. The Fourniotes call themselves simply Christians, ignorant of the existence of other Christian sects. Most of them think that the Catholics, for example, believe in some other God, not Christ. The only Christian set they know of is the Jehovah's Witnesses - a sect present in Greek society - whom they regard with contempt.

What we find here is a rather poor ideological field in contrast, as we will soon see, to the large body of superstitious and magical beliefs relating to the Little Tradition and also to those relating to the domestic domain and the life-cycle.

The Fourniotes have only a rough knowledge of the Christian doctrine. They know the story of the Creation, the story of the Fall of Man from Paradise, the story of the parthenogenetic birth of Christ, a couple of the miracles Christ performed, His Resurrection, Judas' treachery, the existence of Lazarus, and Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection. They believe in Heaven and Hell, and that the souls of the dead go to either according to the dead person's acts during his or her lifetime. They know the date of saints' days and all other Orthodox Church celebrations. They know a few religious poems and chants.

Definitely, Fourni Society Lacks any Consistent Theological Doctrine

When it comes to the exegesis and justification of the various religious practices they adhere to, the Fourniotes do not seem to have very clear ideas. For example, they do not know what the Holy Communion is for according to Christian dogma. They give all kinds of explanations, some of them very far-fetched, like that it is 'to be prepared for sudden death', or 'for purification'. Similarly, they ignore the reason for fasting. One of the explanations they gave me was that it is to restrain men's sexual desires and make them keep to the sexual fasting that is also required at the same time as fasting from food! The most usual explanation the Fourniotes can offer on the subject of the various religious practices is that 'it is a good thing; it is religious; it is as we learnt we must do'. Even the priest did not know what communion is supposed to mean to Christians, and said that it is practised to show one's love for Christ.

What is most interesting and significant is the absence of a conceptualization of male and female in terms of the Great Tradition dichotomies - Adam and Eve, Mary Magdalene/Eve and the Virgin Mary - which have been reported in other Greek communities (Campbell, 1964; Du Boulay, 1974, 1986). On the contrary, the villagers used the expression 'She is as beautiful as the Virgin Mary', which shows that they do not consider female beauty, and its implied sexual desirability, as a negative attribute. As I have discussed in the chapter on Honour and Shame, sex is viewed by Fourni people as enjoyable and desirable, and not as a natural flaw. Accordingly, they do not derive from religion any ideational scheme that would sanction female sexual nature in negative terms. And again, as I will discuss shortly, they limit their conceptualization of sex as polluting only vis-à-vis contact with the sacred.

Children's religious education starts from a very early age. Grandmothers teach them to cross themselves even before they can speak. Early religious education consists in identifying the various religious symbols and signs. Children learn to cross themselves at the sound of the church bells, to identify the icon of the house as of that particular saint, to recognize the chapel or shrine of a certain saint, to cross themselves at the mention of God or saints, to recognize the tune of religious chanting, and so on. They are not taught any religious stories; they learn about Christ's birth at the primary school at the age of seven. Until then they are told that 'This icon is of the Virgin Mary', and 'That icon is of Christ', and nothing more.

When we look into notions of purity and impurity, however, we come upon a distinctly clear conceptual field. But, most significantly, these purity and pollution notions are folk notions. They actually belong to the Little Tradition, which, as we will see in the following chapter, elaborates this theme to a considerable extent in the dramatic complex of dreams and miracles.

Impurity is basically associated with sexual contact - and even then there is only mild stress: sex is not a state of impurity on its own, but only when it comes in proximity with the sacred. To be more specific, there is a pollution taboo on touching sacred objects after sexual contact and a pollution taboo on menstruating women touching sacred objects, though not for visiting devotional places or participating in religious rituals (as godmothers, for example).

We do not find impurity notions concerning male or female nature. The various impurity notions of the Christian theological doctrine (i.e., of the Great Tradition) have become obsolete in the society of Fourni.

The only one retained (and re-elaborated by the Little Tradition) is the impurity of the sexual act and menstruation vis-à-vis the sacred.

Although it belongs to the Little Tradition, I consider it in this chapter as well, since it pertains also to behaviour in the church and church ceremonies. The boundary line between the Great and Little Tradition is not always easy to draw as the two overlap to a great extent.

The major factor that defines states of purity and impurity has to do with sex and sexuality. Sexual intercourse brings man to a state of impurity, under which he must not approach the sacred. A large number of prohibitions relate to that: a person who has had sex the night before should not kiss the icons upon entering a church or chapel, should not take communion, be blessed (spreading of Holy Oil on the forehead), or purified (drinking Holy Water). Similarly, one should abstain from sexual intercourse on the major fasting occasions. The justification for these prohibitions is that one must not approach the sacred if not 'clean', as they say. And sexual intercourse makes for impurity, hence a person in that state must not come into direct contact with the sacred.

To emphasize this counterposition of sex and the sacred, the villagers relate the story of some man\* who built a house by the ruins of an old monastery. The priest told him that it was not proper to make a home on a sacred site, but the man and his wife did not take any notice. Soon afterwards, the wife was mentally affected ('βλαφτηκε'), and the couple was forced to move elsewhere as a result. The implication of the story is that sex should not be performed on a sacred site.

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\*The fact that the man in the story is not given a name supports my belief that the story does not relate to some actual happening, but rather serves as a parable.

This ideal scheme is, however, often violated in real life. Sexual abstinence on fast days is more of an ideal rule than actual practice. What is more, many a time eloping couples have sought refuge in a chapel where they spend the night as husband and wife. The temporary breaking of the rule does not, though, affect the strength of the villagers' belief in the impurity integral to sex in relation to the sacred. Whatever misfortune befalls the married couple thereafter (divorce, miscarriage, defective babies, loss of a child, etc.) is attributed to the violation of that rule.

This notion about the impurity of sex vis-a-vis the sacred has one more application. A house must not be built on a site where there was once an oven,\* because the oven was used to bake bread, which is sacred ('bread contains Christ'). What really matters, the villagers say, is that the bedroom might be placed right where the oven once stood.

Impurity is also caused by menstruation. Women during menstrual days should avoid contact with the sacred. They must not kiss icons on entering the church or a chapel, must not take communion, must not touch Holy Water or Holy Oil.

This state of impurity relating to menstrual blood does not, however, affect men in any way.

#### e) Male and Female Participation in the Great Tradition

Before proceeding to examine the Little Tradition in the next chapter, I should like to tackle the relation of gender roles and the Great Tradition, i.e., to question the extent and the nature of male and female participation in church celebrations and church rituals.

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\*An oven is a stone construction, 2 metres high and 1 metre wide, shaped like an Eskimo's igloo. In the past, every house had an oven in its yard which was used for baking.



In reviewing the above data, we notice that a greater number of women than men attend church on the religious celebrations of the Orthodox calendar, on regular Sunday mass and evening mass (Vespers), and the major celebrations of Easter and Christmas. One major church rite, the 'Request Rites' (Σαπαραρι), is asked for and attended exclusively by women (mostly those who are elderly). On the other hand, in the case of weddings and baptisms we come upon a change of traditional habits: among the younger generation there is a growing tendency for husband and wife to attend such occasions together, while among the older generation we again have the phenomenon of a greater number of women attending them. The case of funerals is idiosyncratic: it seems that here men and women attend them more or less to the same degree. Perhaps this idiosyncrasy is due to the fact that it is not viewed merely as a religious ceremony, but much more as a paying of respect to the deceased and his/her family.

Finally, we notice that the number of women taking part in confession (on the rare occasions of the visit of a priest from some other parish) and Holy Communion dramatically exceeds that of men. Especially, as far as confession is concerned, it seems that Fourni men have definitely dismissed it as part of their religious life.

The performance of a rite of Purification or a rite of Blessing by the priest is almost always requested by women. This can be accounted for by the fact that such rites mostly concern households. A female household head asks for the performance of such a rite when first establishing a new house and whenever she feels that 'some evil power has taken hold' of the household (e.g., when there is ill-feeling among family members, in cases of frequent illnesses, and other misfortunes). The brief yearly Blessing rite performed by the priest in all the village houses on the celebration

of Epiphany and on Easter Wednesday is again a rite that concerns the welfare of households. On all these occasions men are very rarely present, usually by chance. It is women who ask for such rites, and it is women who are present and pay the priest for his services. Clearly, they are rites relating to the female concern over household welfare, and accordingly they are rites addressed mainly to women.

Still, there is one occasion on which a Blessing rite is asked for and attended by men. Whenever a man buys a new boat, he asks the priest for a Blessing rite for the boat (a rite performed on or close to the boat) before launching it, in order to ensure safety in sailing and prosperity in business. Here again, we see that when it concerns some part of the male realm, it is men who ask for a Blessing rite.

So far, I have considered the gender relation to the Great Tradition from the point of view of attending religious celebrations and church rituals and asking for the performance of such rites. Now I will look into another aspect of the gender relation to the Great Tradition: the nature of participation in certain celebrations and certain church rituals.

On the day of Orthodoxy (23 March), Christmas Day and Easter Wednesday, a pair of the village church's icons are carried around the village and taken into every house. This rite is similar in scope to the Blessing rite: the introduction of the church icons in the house aims at chasing away evil and ensuring the welfare of the household and its members. On these occasions, the icons are carried by the so-called 'priest's children'. A couple of village men also act as assistants to the priest. One carries the censer and the other a basket where women put money for the services of the priest. The two men are in plain clothes, while the 'priest's children' wear surplices that belong to the church.

The 'children' also help the priest in performing his religious duties on various other occasions: at funerals, on the day of Epiphany, on the day of Orthodoxy, on Holy Friday, and on Easter Saturday (when a ceremonial procession takes place around the church and then through the main village street down to the seashore), they hold the cherubs. Similarly, one or more 'priest's children' stand by the priest, holding the Holy Bible and performing other minor tasks, on the occasions of Holy Communion, weddings and baptisms, the church services at Christmas, during Easter Week, and on major saints' days.

The adult male assistants of the priest similarly help him on various other occasions, such as church services during Easter Week, at Christmas, morning mass, on the Blessing and Purifying rites, on the processions formed on the day of Epiphany, on the day of Orthodoxy, on Holy Friday, on Easter Saturday, and at funerals and baptisms. One of them carries the censer (both in processions and during church services) while the other carries a tray for money in the church, or a basket for the money when visiting houses for the performance of some rite.

Another pair of adult villagers (one of either sex) also take an active part assisting in the performance of church celebrations and church rituals. An older man and two older women are in charge of the sale of candles. On entering the main church door, on the right there is the counter with the candles. Each person entering buys a candle, lights it, places it in a candle-holder next to the St. Nikoľas icon, crosses himself, and kisses the icon, before proceeding to the interior of the church.

All these people who perform such supportive tasks do so by inclination and piety. They do not receive any money or other material reward for their services; they do it because they like it.



Other villagers also take part in the performance of church rituals on occasion. At funerals, four male relatives of the deceased carry the coffin from the bereaved house to the church and, after the memorial service, from the church to the cemetery. Women taken an even more active part in the preparations for a funeral. Close kinswomen together with a couple of female specialists, cleanse and dress the body (male or female) in the appropriate fashion (in a shroud and then in the deceased's best clothes). They also prepare the ceremonial food and distribute it after the funeral, and hold the household 'cleansing' rite. After the funeral, relatives and friends visit the deceased's house and partake of coffee and special small, sweetened ceremonial loaves.

At weddings, one or more person of either sex acts as wedding sponsor during the church ritual. Similarly, at baptisms, one or more person of either sex acts as godparent(s). Here again, the principle for such a performance is usually kinship. Godparents are most often relatives of the child's parents and undertaking that role is regarded as reinforcing already existing or sometimes distant kinship bonds. Sponsorship of weddings is also governed by the same spirit; bestmanship established a pseudo-kinship relation, which is highly valued in Fourni society.

f) Godparents and Sponsors

Wedding and baptism sponsorship does not create relationships of a political content as in some other Greek communities. Sponsors are drawn from among relatives and friends, rather than strangers. In Fourni it is usual to have three or four godparents or wedding sponsors. Some villagers explain this on the grounds that in the old days of economic poverty, one individual could not afford the expenses of sponsoring a baptism

or a wedding on his own, and accordingly, three or four persons joined in to share them. Godparents provide a golden cross on a chain and the new clothes the baby will put on at the conclusion of the ritual, and the oil that will be used during the mystery. The priest immerses the child in water three times, and then the godparents must cover every bit of his/her body with oil, so that 'Christ's grace spreads to all his/her parts', as the villagers explain.

The godparents' role does not end with the church ritual of baptism. They also have the obligation to provide the child with its first pair of shoes when it reaches the age of walking. This concludes their role of providing the child with a full set of clothes that symbolizes his/her re-birth in the status of a Christian. However, they continue to present gifts of clothes and shoes to their godchild for several years at Christmas and Easter celebrations. Another obligation they have is to take the child to the church for Communion on three successive Sundays immediately after the baptism, and hence the full cycle of the establishment of the child as a member of the Christian community is complete.

Wedding sponsors provide the large ornamental candles for the ritual, the sugar-coated almonds distributed to the attending crowd, and the wedding crowns. Their obligations end with the completion of the church ritual. At the wedding ritual, the wedding sponsor crosses his hands three times, switching the wedding crowns on the groom's and bride's heads. The villagers say that he must then baptize the groom's and bride's child, 'for his hands to uncross' or 'for his hands to unbind'. Hence, the wedding sponsor's ritual role is ideally completed by the performance of a second ritual, that of baptism - a conceptualization that points out that for the Fourni people marriage is not complete until it takes the form of a family by the begetting

of children. Still, in practice this ideal is usually ignored. Wedding sponsors ought also to undertake the baptism ritual of the first child of the couple they have wed.

Godparenthood and wedding sponsorship establish a special relationship between godparents/wedding sponsors and the families of the person undergoing the ritual. This is symbolized by the employment of the title of address, 'Koumbaros', which is used reciprocally by the families of the people involved. The network thus established is quite large. It includes the sponsor's parents, spouse and children, the godchild's/bride's/groom's parents, grandparents, siblings and their spouses, parental siblings and their spouses, children and their spouses. A godchild addresses its godparents as 'Nono'.

Godparenthood establishes a special bond of spiritual kinship among godchildren of the same godparent, as well as among one's godchildren and natural children. This special bond is denoted by the term 'good siblings', which, the villagers say, means 'even better than siblings'. 'Good siblings' (kalathelfia) cannot marry among themselves. The spiritual kinship in this case is considered by the Fourni people as even stronger than natural kinship. For that reason godparents take special care to baptize children of the same sex, so as to avoid the creation of additional marriage restrictions among members of the community that are not related by kinship.

No similar marriage prohibition rules apply to the bond established by wedding sponsorship. The relationship between the wedding sponsors and the bride and groom is not conceptualized as spiritual kinship. It does not carry any implications of a prohibitive nature as concerns sexual interaction either. This is explicitly expressed in the village sayings

'The koumbaros with the koumbara once a week' (ο κουμπάρος την κουμπάρα μια φορά την εβδομάδα) which means, 'The wedding sponsor has sex with the bride once a week', and 'The koumbaros pulled the koumbara in the ship hold' (ο κουμπάρος την κουμπάρα στο αμπάρι την εστράβα).

During the Easter Week church celebrations several villagers participate in various tasks. Young women decorate the catafalque with flowers; six young girls play the part of the women carrying the Holy Myron on Good Friday evening; a female chorus sings on that same evening in the church; a few village women get together and make the scarecrow of Judas which is to be hung on a tree in the churchyard on Easter Sunday and set on fire. Apart from the usual men assisting the priest on other occasions, other village men also take part in the Easter celebrations. Four men carry the catafalque on their shoulders in the Good Friday procession; young men rush to hang wreaths of flowers on the wooden statue of Christ on the Cross; men and boys gather branches and set up the two heaps of branches which are set on fire after the Saturday Resurrection rite; boys and young men also throw firecrackers and dynamite on Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday.

Then there is also the domestic sphere of preparation for saints' celebrations, Christmas and Easter, as well as for the rituals of weddings, baptisms and funerals. The core of the domestic preparation on the occasion of such major church celebrations consists of the cooking of ceremonial food. The preparation of the ceremonial food by women is a big affair, especially for Christmas and Easter. They start two or three weeks beforehand, and small groups of female relatives or friends get together to prepare large quantities of dough for the various ceremonial sweets to be taken to the village bakery.

Finally, if we consider the ideological reproduction of the Great Tradition, we notice that it is women who undertake the task of the religious education of children. It is especially grandmothers who teach the young children how to cross themselves and kiss the church icons, how to recognize the icons of Christ, the Virgin Mary and various saints, narrate to them the story of Christ's birth and his crucifixion. But mothers also contribute to their children's religious education and take them to church from a very early age.

Reviewing the data, my conclusion is that women's participation is far greater in attending and asking for religious celebrations and rituals. Although, when it comes to assisting the priest and performing specific tasks concerning church rituals, we observe that it is men who assume the important roles (carrying church icons, the catafalque, the censer, the cherubs). I suppose this should not be considered surprising, since the Christian Great Tradition is clearly a male-centred religion.

In other words, the conclusion is that female participation in the Great Tradition is far more intensive and extensive, while male participation is far lesser in degree. It is mostly the women who form the body of devotees. Most men do not concern themselves with the Great Tradition, but in the case of the performance of church rituals, male participation is of a much more prominent nature, while women are allowed only secondary assisting tasks.

These are the data on the relation of gender roles and the Great Tradition as far as the body of the devotees is concerned. However, there is one more instance of the relation of gender roles and religion, and this instance concerns authority roles within the Great Tradition.

The priest is the representative of God and the church, the person ordained for performing church rituals. In that role he has a permanent female assistant, the so-called 'candle-lighter' (καντηλαναφτισσα). The candle-lighter must be an elderly widow, past menopause. She assumes that role by inclination, though she receives a monthly payment from the state. Her main responsibility is the upkeep of the church. She holds the church keys, she looks after the maintenance of the interior decoration, she makes sure it is regularly cleaned (a task for which village women are called in to help with), takes care that the oil-lamps are lit every evening and on celebrations, and she keeps an eye on the candles that devotees light and put in the candle-holders. In the villages of Thimena and Chrisomilia, there is no priest, and the candle-lighter is fully responsible for the church.

Apart from her role as the church-keeper, the candle-lighter also acts as the priest's main assistant in church services, celebrations and rituals (though only within the church; she never accompanies him outside it for the performance of rituals). Her assistance consists of handing him whatever he needs during the church service (the Bible, the censer, the Holy Oil, etc.), putting these items back in their places, and managing the attendants as well as showing people participating in a ritual (e.g., the godparents or the people queueing to take Holy Communion) to their proper places during the celebration or the ritual. She also handles all the distribution of ceremonial bread, as for example, on the occasion of the Holy Communion and the rite of Requests.

She is, in theory, the only female who has access to the sanctuary, i.e., the holy part of the church behind the holy altar. However, she never uses the main entrance, which is used exclusively by the priest, but the left-hand door like the 'priest's children'.

When it comes to considering her role in the context of the relation of gender roles and the Great Tradition, I would say that her tasks and responsibilities are no less prominent than those of the male villagers who on occasions assist the priest during church celebrations and the performance of rituals. However, I do not think this comparison is appropriate. The candle-lighter is not just another devotee. She has a special role within the church, a role with a certain authority. The way I see it is that the priest and the candle-lighter constitute a pair allotted differing tasks and differing degrees of authority and responsibility within the church. In that sense, the candle-lighter's role should be compared to the priest's role in viewing the gender roles within the Great Tradition.

Looking at it in that way, the obvious conclusion is that the candle-lighter's role is distinctly less prominent than that of the priest. Hence, we can say that the distribution of power between these two reflects the gender relation within the Great Tradition: male religious tasks are always more prominent than female religious tasks. Our data show that in Fourni the sexual division of religious labour is patterned according to the theology of the Orthodox Christian tradition which grants men a much more prominent role and position, both in the sacred and in the secular domain.

## CHAPTER FIVE

RELIGION: THE LITTLE TRADITIONa) Features of the Little Tradition

The Little Tradition is a religious cult that has its own sacred places of worship (the shrines, the chapels and the household icon-stands), its own way of communication with the divine (direct, unmediated communication that dispenses with any representatives), and a dramatic field (dreams, miracles, apparitions and miraculous icons) that, through dramatization, expresses and reproduces the conceptual components that define this indigenous religious cult.

I will start by describing the places of worship of the Little Tradition. The village church of St. Nikolas is the centre of the celebrations and all other ritual events associated with the Great Tradition. But at the outskirts of the village, on the slopes of the surrounding hills, as well as dispersed around the island, there are a number of shrines and chapels.

These devotional places are a most vital part of the folk religious life. The villagers visit them to communicate with the divine in a person-to-person manner and to establish the reciprocal relationship the Little Tradition allows between man and the Heavenly. The women take regular care of them, and keep them clean and white-washed inside and out. Both sexes are especially concerned with the tasks of providing oil for the oil-lamps of the icons and keeping the oil-lamps burning.

The Little Tradition is a religious cult that focuses on the worship of saints and the Virgin Mary (while God and Christ, although assumed



to exist, are not central figures in it).<sup>1</sup> The shrines and the chapels are each dedicated to a particular saint or the Virgin Mary.

The chapels are the centres for individual worship, vows and fulfilling the promises made, as well as the field of miraculous happenings. Each is the place of residence of the saint to whom it is dedicated and as such it is the place where the individual devotee communicates with the divine in the person of that particular saint.

Many villagers develop a particular affiliation to a certain saint because of a vow fulfilled or a dream or a miracle, and for the rest of their lives they engage in an exclusive devotional relationship with that saint.

The chapels and shrines have been built by individuals on their own land or a site bought for that purpose. Some of them are the offering some villager promised in a vow, and some of them have been built after a religious dream. A couple of them were built by the deceased Reverend John (1923-1975), who is said to have been a particularly devout Christian and a 'true clergyman'.

The chapel of St. Minas was built by a woman who could not have children. She asked St. Minas for a male child, and promised in return to build a chapel 'for him to live in' and to dedicate her son to him (i.e., make him a monk to that chapel). Soon afterwards her request was granted, and she fulfilled her promise.

The chapels of Saviour and Christ, on the outskirts of the village, were also built in fulfilment of a vow.

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1. I will hereafter employ the terms 'the Heavenly' and 'the divine' instead of God, so as not to confuse with God the Father, who does not figure in the Little Tradition in Fourni.

The majority of the shrines too have been built as a result of a vow, and the women who have made those vows take regular care of their icon oil-lamps.

The chapel of the Virgin Mary stands on a site where there was once a house. The housewife had a dream one night of a woman in black (always interpreted by the villagers as the Virgin Mary) who told her that that was her own home and ordered her away. The lady ignored the dream, which then recurred three more times. The fourth day the house caught fire and was ruined. The family realized the significance of the dream, and placed icons among the ruins. Soon afterwards they rebuilt the house into a chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary. This all happened in 1970.

The chapels of St. Antreas, St. Konstantinos, St. George and St. Theologos were built on sites where the icons of these saints were found buried. On each occasion the icon came to light after a dream which revealed to either a man or a woman the presence of the buried icon. The Fourniotes refer to such dreams in terms of an expression that sees the saint as an active subject making the revelation by imposing a dream. The expression ('Ο Άγιος τόν/την ονειρέψε') cannot be translated accurately into English. It involves the change of the verb 'to have a dream', which takes a person as the subject, into a verb that has another active subject, the saint, who brings along a dream to a person for a certain purpose. Even more interesting is the fact that the Greek language does not contain such a grammatical form either, this is a form created by (and used only by) the Fourniotes. After digging up the icon, those men built a chapel there. The buried icon was interpreted as a sign that the site was sacred and the dream was interpreted as the saint's wish to communicate the fact to the villagers and make them keep the site as such.

I would like to cite two more cases which stand out as further striking examples of the construction of a place of worship motivated by a heavenly request. The shrine of St. Thimitrios was also built after a dream, though of a different kind. A woman's dead husband came to her in a dream and ordered her to 'build him' a shrine on a certain site (την οὐρεψεν να τον χτισει) in order to remember him. She bought the site in question, and proceeded to build a shrine which was dedicated to her husband's namesake saint. The chapel of St. Taxiarchis was built after a series of apparitions, dreams and miracles. First, two little girls saw an apparition of three children in white dresses with red ribbons across their chest. A man then had a dream that there was a church standing on that site. Another man took a big stone from that site to press his grapes and make wine, but the wine turned bad. Soon afterwards, the grandfather of the two little girls interpreted those three events as heavenly signs indicating the sacredness of the place.

Finally, there is one more devotional place that belongs to the Little Tradition: the household icon-stand. Every house has a special place (preferably in the main bedroom) where they keep their icons, an icon oil-lamp, a bottle with Holy Water, and the wedding crowns. Every evening the lady of the house lights the icon oil-lamp which is then left on during the night.

This icon-stand is a sacred place. It is believed to be a dwelling place of the divine. The icons are not seen as mere pictures of the saint figuring in them, but as a true representation of that saint. The saint is perceived as truly present in his/her icon. In other words, the icon is not simply a sacred object, but it is an active subject. In accordance with this belief, we will see, later on, how icons are believed to communicate heavenly messages.

The presence of the icon-stand ensures the protection of the house from evil. It is a place where the household members can pray if they wish, communicate with the divine and ask a favour, and, even more, it is a place where the Heavenly can communicate a message to them (as we shall see later).

The Little Tradition does not only have its own devotional places; it also has its own particular way of communication with the divine.

In the Great Tradition, man can communicate directly with the Heavenly through prayer, but most communicates with it in an indirect way through the mediation of the priest. The priest acts as the representative of God and performs the rituals by which the devotee is brought into contact with the supernatural.

In the Little Tradition, communication with the divine is of a completely different nature. The devotee comes in direct, person-to-person contact with the Heavenly without the mediation of any religious functionary. The essence of this belief is the idea of closeness between man and the supernatural. The Heavenly is not conceived of as a distant entity responding to a distinct conceptual system. It is conceived of as subject to the conceptual system of the villagers. The saints punish people for deviations from the religious prescriptions of the Little Tradition by slapping them in the face, beating them up, and throwing them down. The relationship between man and the sacred is one of reciprocity: the saints give something in return for something else. And when the devotee does not fulfil his/her part of the bargain, the saints come to demand it, and at the end punish negligence. In that sense, the model of the relationship between man and the supernatural reflects social principles.

The reciprocal nature of the relationship between man and the divine is best exemplified in the instance of vows.

Vows are requests of life. The divine is believed to have the power to protect life and to give life. A person will make a vow when his/her own life is in danger (in illness, or facing a storm at sea), when one of his/her children is seriously ill, and when he/she wishes to have a child or a child of a particular sex. Women also make vows when their husband is at sea during a bad storm, or when he is seriously ill.

Vows are addressed to the Virgin Mother and the various saints. The holy person to whom the vow is addressed is usually chosen according to the powers attributed to him/her. A mother making a vow for having a child will usually address herself to the Virgin Mother. A woman with a sick child will usually make a vow to St. Marina, who is a female saint regarded as the patron of sick children. A man facing a rough sea will usually address St. Nikolas, the patron saint of sailors. Other saints are each considered to possess special powers in the curing of a particular ailment.

As I have already mentioned, some villagers have a particular affiliation to a certain saint, either because of dreams they had of that saint, or because of some miraculous happening in which that saint figured, or because the saint has rendered them the favour asked in a previous vow.

Vows consist of a long procedure that establishes the reciprocal relationship between the devotee and the divine. The individual asks the Virgin Mary or a saint to grant a favour - a favour that concerns the preservation or the offering of life. In exchange, he/she promises an offering of some kind. When the favour is believed to have been granted, the vower must keep to this promise and make the offering. If he/she shows negligence, the Virgin Mary or the saint comes in a dream to remind them of the promise. The dream is repeated until the promise is fulfilled.

As the villagers say, 'If you promise something, the saint keeps reminding you of it' (Αμα ταξεις ο Άγιος στο θυμίζει). By the fulfilment of the promise, the cycle of reciprocity closes.

If, however, the devotee does not adhere to this rule of reciprocity, there are sanctions. The divine punishes the devotee who after repeated reminders in the form of dreams does not keep to his/her part of the bargain. Illness will recur, an accident may happen, or the saint will employ physical violence and beat up the negligent person. Fear of sanctions makes the villagers maintain the reciprocity dictated in transactions with the divine.

There is a wide range of offerings promised to the Virgin Mary and the saints in exchange for the request made in a vow. Some of them are material, while some of them are simply demonstrations of devotion. The vower may promise to call a child after the saint, offer to the saint a candle as high as the person rescued, offer silver or golden graven pictures of the bodily part cured, provide the expenses for a mass in that saint's chapel, and donate a new chandelier or other luxury in the chapel.

Women also promise to walk barefoot to the saint's chapel or shrine, enter the chapel on their knees, offer ceremonial bread for the saint on a certain date every year, undertake the care of a chapel or shrine (i.e., keep it clean, light the icon oil-lamp and supply oil for it) on a regular basis, fast certain days of the year, or wear mourning for certain religious periods, for example, during Lent or during the fifteen days preceding the celebration of the Virgin Mary on 15 August.

Finally, the Little Tradition has a dramatic field which, through dramatization, expresses and reproduces the conceptual components that

define this native religious cult. A range of dreams, miracles, apparitions and icons endowed with miraculous powers encapsulate the villagers' religious beliefs.

If one singles out the central themes in these dramatic narrations of religious context, one comes out with a number of bundles of relations. These narrations establish on the one hand the obligation of the human towards the divine, and on the other the expectations of the human from the divine. Once again, we come up with the principle of reciprocity in the relationship between man and the supernatural. Man must abide by a set of rules that dictate the proper care of and proper behaviour towards the sacred. The divine, in return, provides for those who have faith and fulfil their obligations to it.

In the category of dramatic narrations that establish the obligations of man towards the divine, we can distinguish four main themes.

1. First, there is the theme of the inviolability of the sacred.

Men should not damage or take away any object that constitutes part of a sacred place. Also, men must not build an oven or living quarters on a sacred site.

An old man narrates a miracle that happened when some strangers tried to take oil from the chapel of St. John. That man and his wife were living nearby the chapel at the time, acting as keepers. One night, a boat with divers from the island of Kalymnos came ashore. They went into the chapel to take oil from the supply meant for the icon oil-lamps, because they had run short of oil for the boat engine. But as they were about to leave the chapel, the door closed on its own and could not be opened. The strangers realized their mistake and promised

St. John to compensate by sending five big tins of oil - which promise they actually fulfilled later on. Then the door opened of its own accord and the men were free to go.

A villager decided to take some big stones lying near the chapel of St. John to build a house. As he was carrying the stones, he was suddenly slapped on the face and was blinded. The villagers heard him screaming, and carried him back to the village. He was then taken to the monastery on the island of Patmos, where they placed holy relics on his eyes, and he recovered his sight.

On another occasion, some strangers stole the icon of St. Minas from his chapel. An old woman living on the tiny island where the chapel is, had a dream of St. Minas on his horse. He said to her: 'They are taking me away tonight, but you do not care'. She had that dream on the very night the icon was being stolen. The monk of the chapel of St. Minas started on a six-month journey looking for the thieves. St. Minas came in his dream and said to him, 'I will make you suffer even more because you did not take good care of me'. Later on, St. Minas came again in his dream and revealed the exact location of the place where his icon had been buried by the thieves. On the return of the icon to the chapel, the chapel's bell started chiming on its own.

At the site of the cemetery of the small village of Chrisomilia, there are marble stones that look like ruins. The people believe these ruins must be the remains of an old church. Before the cemetery was built there, a couple had constructed a hut on



that spot. One night, St. John slapped the man twice on the face to make him move his home from that sacred site.

In 1970, another couple were living in a house which has now been turned into a chapel, the chapel of the Little Virgin Mary (Παναγίτσα). The wife had a dream of a woman dressed in black (the Virgin Mother is always represented as a woman in black) who said to her, 'This is my house. Go away, or harm will befall you'. The dream was repeated on the next night, but the woman did not pay any attention. Soon afterwards, the house caught fire and was destroyed. They understood then that the site was sacred. The husband rebuilt the house, and placed the icon of the Virgin Mary in it.

2. Secondly, there is the theme of taking care of the divine: visiting chapels regularly, keeping the icon oil-lamps burning, keeping icons and other religious objects in good condition, taking offerings to the saints.

A woman suggested to her husband that together they visit the church of St. John in the village of Thiman on the day of his celebration, but the man refused. At night he had a vision of St. John who said to him, 'You think it boring to come and see me' (Βαρύεσαι να με δείς). And he slapped the man on the face several times. The wife could see her husband talking, but could not see St. John. Every year ever after the couple visit St. John on the day of his celebration.

Another man was accused of similar negligence by St. Minas in a dream. The saint complained in the following words, 'You have forgotten me. Why, other times, you used to visit me more frequently'.

Another man was slapped by St. John in a dream for having refused to take some villagers to the saint's church in his boat.

A young boy heard the icon in his mother's house 'knock' (να χτυπάει) one night. He got up and realized that the icon oil-lamp had burnt out. Ever since, he has taken particular care to check that oil-lamp before going to bed.

Another household icon (an icon of the Virgin, the Mirtithiotissa) is said to 'knock' every time its oil-lamp burns out at night or on a religious celebration, as well as when the household members work on a Holy Day.

The monk of St. Minas' chapel has claimed that the saint's icon would 'whistle' (σφύριζε) whenever its oil-lamp burnt out.

A woman narrates that when she was twelve years old, she had a dream of St. Marina asking for her help. Next day, she visited her chapel and found that her icon had fallen on the floor and the glass had broken. She immediately took the icon to the village to have it repaired.

On the way to the chapel of St. Minas, there is a mark in the earth called 'the foot of Theoloyou' (το ποδάρι της Θεολογού).

A woman by the name of Theoloyou was taking some ceremonial bread to St. Minas as an offering. On the way she ate it, and decided to return to the village. But her foot got stuck in the earth, and it left that mark which still exists in that spot.

An old woman was taking a vase of flowers to St. Minas' chapel. On the way she asked her husband to carry it for a while, but

he refused and cursed the vase and St. Minas. It was the day of the celebration of St. Minas and a church service was held in his chapel. That man happened to be the last one from the congregation to leave the chapel. As he was heading out, the chapel door closed. The villagers tried to open it from the outside, but could not. The man saw St. Minas coming out of his icon and was beaten until 'he turned black'. The villagers found the man unconscious and badly bruised. Later, the man's mule disappeared and was finally found roped to a tree at the very spot where the man had cursed St. Minas.

3. Thirdly, there is the theme of keeping to the promises made to the divine.

A fisherman was fishing in his boat around the island of St. Minas' chapel. Another boat approached and a villager gave him a bottle of oil for the chapel of St. Minas. The fisherman dropped the bottle in the sea by mistake and promised St. Minas to bring him another one. Ten days later his wife, who did not know of the event, had a dream informing her that her husband owed something to St. Minas. The man realized that the dream was meant for the promise of another bottle of oil, and hurried to fulfil it.

In dreams following a vow, we encounter this same theme of keeping one's promises to the saint, as I have mentioned above. The saint comes in a dream to remind one of unfulfilled promises and at the end to punish persistent negligence.

4. Fourthly, there is the theme of blasphemy. Cursing the divine or cursing on or near a sacred place is inexcusable and punishable.

The villagers curse a great deal, and often in reference to the supernatural. 'I fuck your/his Christ', and 'I fuck your Virgin Mary', are quite common cursing phrases. Still, the Little Tradition prescription condemns cursing in reference to the divine.

Two little sisters were eating grapes. The one girl was eating the bigger ones, and the other girl cursed her in the terms, 'I fuck your Christ'. The wooden staircase of their house cracked and a tiny monk dressed in golden clothes appeared and then vanished. The two girls burst into tears and their mother explained this vision as 'the work of the saint' (εργο του Αγίου) aimed at scaring the little girl who cursed.

A woman went to her garden near the chapel of the Virgin Mary to plant aubergines. She dropped one, could not find it and cursed it loudly. On her way home, she fell off a stone wall as if somebody had pushed her, and hit her leg. The doctors and X-rays could not find any fracture, but she could not move her leg, or walk. Her younger daughter went to water the garden one day. Turning her eyes to the chapel of the Virgin Mary nearby, she crossed herself and asked the Virgin what was wrong with her mother. That same night she had a dream of a woman dressed in black (the Virgin Mother), who said to her, 'Your mother will soon get well, but should never again curse near the chapel or I will kill her'.

Some fishermen were fishing around the island of St. Minas' chapel. Fishing was not going well and they cursed. The boat suddenly went aground. They realized their mistake and

asked forgiveness from St. Minas. Big waves rose at that spot and the boat was freed.

In the category of dramatic narrations that establish the expectations of man from the divine, we can distinguish three main themes.

1. First, there is the theme of life and death. The divine communicates with man to announce the event of death or to announce the offer of life.

A mother and her two little daughters heard the icon in their house 'knock' three times one night. The mother understood that it was a message that her sailor husband was in danger. Actually, the husband died that night in a boat off the coast of the United States.

The candle-lighter of the church of the Virgin Mary in Chrisomilia says that the Virgin Mary foretold her mother's death in a dream:

A woman had the following dream: it was a dark, rainy night, and she came out of the house to see why it was so dark; she was holding six lighted candles; a tall, horrible-looking man came up to her and blew out four of the candles. Next day, her father and five other men tried to defuse a torpedo. It exploded, and four of the men, including her father, died.

A man twice had a dream of St. John telling him to give some money to a certain village woman. The dream occurred on two nights running. On the third night, that woman's husband died.

On the evening a man called Thimitris was to die, the household icon of St. Thimitris fell off the wall and cracked in the middle.

On another occasion, in a house where they had a sick baby, the household icon of St. Eleutherios shed two tears. Later on that night, the baby died.

The divine does not only announce the sad news of coming death, it also announces the giving of life - birth.

A man had three girls and wanted to beget a son. When his wife was pregnant again, he had the following dream: he was in a boat and, as he came ashore, he saw a lot of people going by. A stranger informed him that his wife had given birth to a son. When he asked the stranger who he was, the stranger replied that he was St. John the Theologos. The man's wife actually gave birth to a son, as was predicted by the dream.

A pregnant woman desired a male child. She had a dream that she was in St. John's chapel and gave birth to a boy. When three days later she bore a son, she promised to give him the name John as a second name in honour of the saint who foretold the happy event.

Another man had seven daughters and wanted a son. St. Panormitis came in his dream and foretold that his wife would give birth to a male child on the condition that they name the boy after him.

2. Secondly, there is the theme of divine protection and divine intervention to cure illness.

A mother and a little child were walking one night a dark alley by the outskirts of the village when the child stumbled and fell down. The mother was about to pick the little one up when she felt a touch on her shoulder. She turned and saw a woman in black with her arms crossed on her chest. 'My Virgin

Mary', the woman exclaimed in fright. She turned her torch on the woman, but there was no one there any more. She understood later that it was the Virgin Mary escorting her and her child and protecting them, because that spot is said to be 'affected' and Evil appears.

One summer in the old days, the grape harvest was completely destroyed by a raid of bees. Only one man's harvest was saved. The villagers attributed it to his possession of the miraculous icon of St. Trifonas who always protected his own in times of need.

A sailor was in a ship near Japan. The ship met with a bad storm, and everybody was naturally scared. That man went to sleep and had a dream of St. George who came aboard and led the ship safely ashore. The man woke up and found out that they had passed the storm.

The theme of divine intervention in curing illness is the backbone of the belief in vows. This theme is restated and emphasized in dramatic narrations that provide proof of the curative powers of the divine.

A woman had a lump in her breast that was diagnosed as needing an operation. The night before this was to take place, she dreamed of a big man, all in white, standing at her bedroom door. He said 'Theologos' (a saint's name) and disappeared. In the morning the woman discovered that the lump did not exist any more, and accordingly there was no further need for an operation.

A villager was suffering from chest pains due to a bad infection of the lungs. In a dream he was advised to call a certain man by the name of Thimitris to give him a massage. But when he went to summon him, that man was also ill in bed. He was given instead the household icon of St. Thimitris. As soon as the icon was placed in his house, he was cured from the chest pains.

A woman was said to 'have been mad' for two years. One evening, she saw an apparition. A white horse started from St. Minas' chapel, galloped over the sea and passed over her. Twenty days later she was cured and once again sane. 'Son, I saw St. Minas himself. He passed over me', she said to her son. And she offered all her jewels to St. Minas to thank him.

Another woman had a dream of entering a church and, upon kissing the icon of the Virgin Mary, she saw Her lips moving. 'Do not visit the doctors any more. Go home and I will give you Holy Myron that will cure you.' Next day, her sister-in-law gave her a bottle of Holy Myron from her visit to a church in Athens. The bottle was identical to the one the woman had seen in her dream. She perceived the incident as a fulfilment of the dream.

3. Thirdly, there is the theme of compensation for true faith. This theme is usually illustrated by narrations of multiplication of food or unexpected riches.
- An exceptionally devout woman went to fetch some oil from her store room. She found the oil springing out of the barrel and multiplying.



The same kind of miracle happened to that woman during World War II, when food was scarce. She looked in her house oven for some leftovers of bread, but there was nothing. When she passed by the oven again, she looked into it and it was empty. The third time she passed by, she saw a big loaf of bread, warm and fresh.

At the end of last century, a village woman was toiling in her garden. Suddenly, there appeared a golden hen and her golden chicks. The woman grabbed three of them and they turned into three golden coins. As the people say, 'It all happened because of her great faith'.

b) The Symbolic Structure of the Little Tradition

I have presented a few representative instances from what seems to be an endless field of similar narratives. What we have here is an ideology of a religious content, consisting of dreams, miracles, apparitions and miraculous 'knocking' icons. These are the various ways in which close contact and communication between the human and the divine are established. Their semantics concern on the one hand the obligations of the devout towards the divine, and on the other hand the expectations the devout have from the divine. The obligations of people towards the divine consist of abiding by the rule of the inviolability of sacred places and objects, taking good care of them, making offerings to the saints and keeping to the promises made to them, and forsaking the use of blasphemy in connection with the divine. The expectations of people from the divine concern mainly matters of life and death: the divine foretells or announces the tragic news of death or the happy coming of a new life, and can offer

protection against Evil, illness and misfortune. Through this particular context, they reveal the religious beliefs pertaining to this local folk religion, the Little Tradition.

We encounter the idea of a universe dominated by certain saints (the locally worshipped saints) and the Virgin Mary. The saints and the Virgin Mary represent benevolent forces which man can address in times of need and enlist their help. It seems that the central metaphysical problem that Fourni society is concerned with is the unpredictability of death. The ideology of the Little Tradition is the folk answer to that. Dreams and icons foretelling the event of an actual death, dreams and apparitions revealing heavenly intervention to protect human beings from misfortune and death, miraculous icons with curative powers, as well as dreams announcing the jubilant event of the coming of a new life (i.e., a child), they all attribute to a lifting of the dark shadow of death. The individual, by believing that he is not alone and helpless in the face of misfortune and death, can endure and accept them more easily.

A most intriguing point, arising from the data on the Little Tradition, is the nature of the relationship between human and divine. It is a type of relationship that deviates widely from the traditional pattern of Christianity and other Great Traditions.

In all these different narrations of dreams, miraculous events, apparitions and miraculous icons, as well as the ideology of vows, a most essential element is the notion of constant, direct contact and communication between the devout and the divine. In the Little Tradition, the divine is not perceived as a distant, overbearing deity, as it is in the Christian dogma. The saints and the Virgin Mary are always present in their place of worship (chapels and shrines) as well as by people's side (always there

to respond to his requests and notice his failings); even omnipresent in the household icons that bear their name. It is noticeable that the villagers, when in a moment of fear they ejaculate, 'Oh, my Holy Virgin!' or 'Oh, my Saint John!', firmly believe that the shadow of the divine is right by their side, granting protection.

The relationship between human and divine is based on the principles of reciprocity and exchange. The devotee has certain obligations towards the divine, which in return fulfils certain expectations people have of it. It is a relationship of give and take as established by the dramatic field of dreams, miracles, etc. The nature of the reciprocal relationship between human and divine is most crucial in reaching an understanding of the Little Tradition as an integral religious system (this will become more evident further on in my discussion).

This reciprocal relationship is in many ways analogous to the relationship of Ancient Greeks to their Olympian gods. Just as Ancient Greeks believed in appeasing their gods by means of sacrifices, the Fourni villagers attribute great emphasis in making offerings to their saints, and generally keeping them satisfied. The fact that almost half of the instances of dreams, apparitions and miraculous events and icons concern the obligations of the devout towards the divine reveals a pantheon of saints who are very particular and demanding in their relationship with man, unlike the image of God as the all-forgiving Father in Christianity.

Pursuing this point further, we notice that the relationship between the villagers and the saints involves elements of a patron-client prototype. As I have already mentioned, many villagers develop a special relationship with one saint in particular or with the Virgin Mary. Quite often this is the saint whose icon the villager has in his/her household. Or, again,

it may be a saint who has granted that person a particular favour. The devotee then cultivates a relationship of exclusiveness with that saint, who more or less becomes his/her patron. In times of need, the devotee addresses the saint asking for a favour or protection in general. And that saint will figure in all dreams, apparitions or miraculous events that person will claim to have experienced.

This patronage relationship is encapsulated in the expression the villagers employ when addressing the saint. They always say 'My St. John', 'My St. Thimitris', 'My St. Minas'. It is an expression that signifies the exclusive alliance of a devotee with a particular saint.

In this relationship of patronage, the saint grants protection in return for being well looked after. The devotee must take care of the saint's place of worship (chapel or shrine) and all objects within it, bring gifts to the saint, visit the saint as a sign of honour, promise and fulfil offerings in return for requests granted by the saint. When the devotee fails in his obligations, the patron saint, acting upon the social paradigm of patronage, comes to demand what is owed to him/her. A regularly recurring theme in dreams is the saint appearing and reappearing to remind a devotee of a promise that has not been fulfilled.

As in ancient Greek religion, the Little Tradition conceives the relationship between human and divine as a patron-client relationship. And, like the gods of Ancient Greece, the saints in the Little Tradition are attributed features of human behaviour and human feelings. When the devotee shows negligence in obligations towards the divine, the saints express resentment on the pattern of local human psychology. They come in a dream and complain in terms such as, 'You have forgotten me', or 'You do not care to come and see me' (Βαρύεσαι να με δεις). And when

the devotee commits a major fault (failure to fulfil a promise after continual reminders by the divine, cursing near a sacred place, or cursing the saint, ignoring the obligations towards the divine, etc.), the saints respond by punishment. It is significant that punishment takes the form of physical violence. The saint beats up or slaps that person on the face - sometimes in a dream, sometimes (as the villagers claim) in actual reality. Punishment by the saint is conceptualized on the pattern of parent-child relationship, which is the only institutionalized instance of physical violence in Fourni society.

I have so far described the symbolic elements that make up the Little Tradition: on the one hand, a complex of the religious traditional beliefs (encountered also in other Balkan and Mediterranean areas), and on the other hand, a pantheon (i.e., the gods and other divine figures) that belongs to the Great Tradition. Now, I will proceed to consider these symbolic elements of the Little Tradition from the viewpoint of semantic and structural analysis. What we notice immediately is the lack of any clear structural patterning and any hierarchical ordering. I will endeavour to demonstrate this point, and finally attempt an explanation.

1. The complex of vows, dreams, miraculous happenings and apparitions provides a semantic delimitation of the obligations and expectations governing the relationship between human and divine. But this is not done on the basis of any distinct structural patterning. Rather, the symbolic elements of this complex articulate at random. There are no particular axes or centres, no particular ordering in terms of time and space dimensions. The specific space allocation of the icon-stand within the house is the only exception, but

this I would think relates to family organization rather than religious organization. The various happenings related in the narrations of the Little Tradition are reported as occurring at any time (day or night) and at any place (near or in chapels, at home, in gardens, on the way around the village hills, even in fishing boats), and there lacks any typified religious calendar or religious festivals or rites relating to them. In brief, the Little Tradition does not seem to involve any organizational principles or hierarchical ordering on the level of devotional practices.

2. The Little Tradition has adopted the pantheon of the Christian Great Tradition, which was part of the religious traditions the first settlers brought along from their places of origin, and which is being reproduced through the church and school authorities. The Little Tradition, however, then proceeded to a radical transformation of the structural form of this pantheon. (a) It changed the hierarchical order among the divinities. God and Christ have become obsolete. The Holy Mother and the saints have been chosen instead as representatives of the Heavenly and placed on an equal hierarchical order. The order of angels is again absent within the Little Tradition. What is happening is in fact that the hierarchical ordering of the divine representatives of the Great Tradition (God and Christ as the top authority, then the Virgin Mary in a role of mediator, then the lesser rank of angels, and finally the bottom rank of the saints) has not been adopted by the Little Tradition. (b) The degradation of the deities of the Christian

Great Tradition also manifests in the form of their relationship with people. The deities of the Little Tradition do represent natural forces (the Virgin Mary is related to reproduction, St. Marina is related to the well-being of young children, St. Nikolas is related to the sea), but at the same time they consist of a mixture of personal relations (analogous to those encountered in ancient Greek religion), patronage relations (analogous to those between landlord and peasant in feudal society) and relations involving physical punishment (analogous to the relation with parents and ancestors). These are merely schematic analogies through which we can perceive the obsolescence of the Christian relations of piety and humility and their replacement by relations of reciprocal exchange and patronage.

The nature of the relationship and interaction between man and the divine in the Little Tradition is distinctly different from that in the Great Tradition. Contact with the supernatural is personal and direct: there are no heavenly (the Holy Mother, the saint) or earthly (the priest) mediators between the devout and the deities.

In summary, we note the absence of structural organization of the symbolic elements that make up the Little Tradition and the absence of hierarchical ordering both in the structure of the pantheon (with its significant lack of a central authority in the form of God or Christ) and in the nature of the relationship between man and the divine. In my view, these findings relate to the absence of centralized administrative organization on the level of social reality.

Fourni depends administratively and legislatively on the Greek state, but this dependence is formal and lacking in content. I have discussed

the relation of Fourni to the Greek state administrative organization in the first chapter and I will not repeat it here. The point I have exemplified there is that, although Fourni in form depends on state administration, in essence it has been left to develop an independent community life and organization, 'forgotten and forsaken even by God' as the villagers so beautifully put it, in isolation and seclusion until very recently.

In result, Fourni has not been much affected by its association to the centralized administrative mechanism of the Greek state, and at the same time has lacked any form of local centralized organization as well as any form of social stratification. In my view, these social constraints have played a significant role in providing ground for the springing of an independent, indigenous religious sphere (the Little Tradition) and the degradation of the Christian Great Tradition in this community. But, most importantly, these have been social constraints that have allowed for the distinct nature of the structure of the pantheon (absence of the central authority of God; cast of saints and the Virgin Mary on equal status) and of the relationship between man and the divine (unmediated relationship of reciprocal exchange involving elements of patronage).

Moreover, it seems to me that the dramatized character of the Little Tradition and the emphasis on the dominant concerns of life and death also relate to the phenomenon of a community that lacks a centralized administrative organization and the natural (just like the social) problems are faced by individual responsibility instead.

Anthropological literature has produced a number of differing approaches to the definition of religion. Religion has been defined as a cognitive system that provides a world view encapsulating social and natural phenomena;



as a vehicle for the expression of cultural values in a way much more adequate than these could be expressed in secular terms; as an expression of society's beliefs and classifications, reflecting upon social reality; as a mechanism for expressing and reinforcing the sentiments most essential to the institutional integration of the society; as a social institution aiming at social concern on how to organize together in society; as a vehicle for the expression and reproduction of the principles of social organization and the hierarchical relations of the society by turning the social law into 'natural' law; as a moral system regulating relationships between individuals in norms of conduct and role expectations.

All different approaches to the definition of religion have resulted from the examination of different cultural settings, and, in that sense, I think they do indeed provide accurate definitions of the structures and functions religious systems assume in different cultures. But each of these approaches, on its own, puts forwards one aspect at a time of the complex phenomenon of religion. For that reason, in my view, none of these definitions should be singled out as the only correct one or be employed as a cover-term for the analysis of religion in every given cultural setting. Instead, the way religion is articulated to the overall social organization, its structuring patterns and the particular functions it assumes should be specified in any given society or cultural area in accordance with the data.

Examining the data on the Little Tradition, I have come to see that although none of the anthropological approaches to religion is adequate on its own to account fully for it, some of them bear relevance on reaching a definition of the Little Tradition in terms of what it is and what it does.

Upon reviewing the data on the Little Tradition in Fourni, we see that its central ideological axis is the theme of life and death. The Little Tradition focuses on the idea of a universe dominated by various saints and the Virgin Mary who have power over life and death. They can protect people from evil, they can cure illness and they can offer a new life (i.e., a child). They represent a benevolent force that, upon request, fights evil and death on behalf of the devout.

In that sense, the Little Tradition provides a cosmology and an ideology that attempts to introduce order and render natural phenomena meaningful. It provides answers to the paradoxes of misfortune, evil, life and death, and thus makes them graspable and tolerable. Fourni people's efforts to render meaningful, accept and intervene in nature and hazard constitute the 'instrumental' aspect of the Little Tradition.

Then, the Little Tradition functions as a symbolic system that not only reflects, but also shapes, social reality. On the one hand, it functions as a vehicle for the expression and reproduction of the principles of social organization. The relationship between human and divine is based on the principle of reciprocity which reflects the social relations of equality and lack of social stratification. Fourni society is a simple society, without any marked differentiation in terms of wealth, without strong sex differentiation, without social classes. Men and women are equally privileged in their representation in the supernatural (there are both male and female saints, as well as the Virgin Mary), have the same rights in communication with it and the same obligations in taking care of the sacred, without any distinction in terms of place and time dimensions. The absence of centralized administrative regulation and class structure renders all members of the society equally responsible

in the maintenance of social cohesion. This takes the form of (1) equal participation of the two sexes; (2) unmediated, personal communication between the individual and the divine, and (3) a non-hierarchical pantheon.

On the other hand, the Little Tradition functions as a moral system essential for the institutional integration of the society. The fulfilment of obligation is a fundamental principle in the maintenance of social cohesion. This principle is projected in the normative and obligatory character of the relationship of exchange between human and divine. The relationship between the devotee and the divine is a relationship of reciprocity, but it also has a coercive aspect. The relationship involves a bargain: people must fulfil the promise they make to the Heavenly, otherwise they face sanctions. The saints punish the devotee who shows ingratitude instead of repayment. The dramatized emphasis placed on the keeping of promises on the symbolic level signifies a cultural emphasis on reciprocity.

The principle is accommodated in the normative and obligatory character of reciprocity that is imposed by the supernatural. The saints 'dictate in one's dream such and such' (ο Άγιος 'ονειρεται') and punish in order to (1) demand repayment (the keeping of promises), and (2) claim certain places as sacred and dictate the inviolability of sacred sites and objects, i.e., in order to establish the duty of reciprocity on the level of symbolic action. In this way, the Little Tradition provides the framework within which the value of social cohesion receives divine sanction, becomes absolute and supreme, externally reinforced.

This is the reason why we encounter a relation of patronage in the sphere of religion while there are no patronage relations in the economic and political spheres. The patronage element in the relationship between

the individual and the divine consists of a moral code aiming at the maintenance and reproduction of social cohesion. In that sense, the Little Tradition also involves an aspect that not only reflects social organization but rather is directed towards the shaping of social reality.

Finally, it seems that the Little Tradition also involves an especially stressed 'expressive' aspect. The coercive character in the relationship of obligatory reciprocity finds a highly dramatized expression: recurring dreams demanding repayment and then physical violence by the saints. The case of the villager who was locked up in a chapel and beaten unconscious by the saint is characteristic of this dramatization. The duty of repayment has the secular aim of maintaining and reproducing social cohesion; but the society does not adequately express it in secular terms. The Little Tradition, instead, provides the vehicle for the expression of the principle of exchange and reciprocity. Dramatization on the symbolic level (in the face of saints who make demands and impose sanctions) constitutes a far more powerful influence towards the goal of social cohesion. It gives it the status of the unquestionable which cannot be achieved in secular terms.

The Little Tradition functions as a moral system in so far as the expression, reproduction and reinforcement of the secular value of social cohesion is concerned. But it does not function as a moral system in connection with other social relations, and we do not encounter any other aspect of social conduct that receives divine sanctioning.

This is, to a great extent, related to the fact that on the plane of social organization and social interaction we have loosely structured social relations. We do not have a social stratification system that might seek ideological legitimization of relations of domination and power

from the religious plane. We do not have corporate kinship groups that might in some way rely on religious ideas for the reinforcement and reproduction of their organizational principles or their social function. We do not have any marked domination of male over female to be supported by divine justifications. Even the code of Honour and Shame is not strict enough to call for religious moralizations.

But what is most intriguing is that within the Little Tradition the notion of sin is completely absent. I have asked many people what sinning is. Their answers have all been variables of the statements 'torturing a weak creature' (such as a little child or a small animal), and 'doing harm'. Their understanding of what 'doing harm' consists of is totally vague. The only specific example I got on occasion (and that by female informants) was the undertaking of abortion - an idea lately instilled in their minds by visiting priests who perform Confession. The villagers do acknowledge the Christian scheme of Confession, Forgiveness and Communion, but, as I have discussed in the section on the Great Tradition, although there is considerable participation in the rite of Communion, Confession is almost absent in this society. Obviously, they do not conceptualize Confession, Repentance and Forgiveness as a tripart unit of unavoidable sequence. For them, Communion can and does exist independently; Confession and Forgiveness are not necessary requirements for taking Communion. In other words, in Fourni society's accommodation of the Great Tradition, we notice a clear underplaying of the notion of sin.

At the same time, the conception of sin is absent within the Little Tradition. The saints and the Virgin Mary punish man when not fulfilling his part of the bargain in the patron-client relationship. But there is no instance of divine punishment of sin. And there are no formalized

definitions of sin. Fourni people state that killing, stealing and adultery are 'bad' (in that order of sequence), but never employ the word 'sin' in this context.

My view on this point is that the absence of the notion of sin relates to the absence of an absolute divine power (i.e., the omnipotent God) in the Little Tradition and the belief in a pantheon of divinities of equal rights and equal power instead.

The belief in God as the creator of the world at once implies the attribution of absolute power to Him and, consequently, also the attribution of a moral code deriving from Him and applying to all His creatures (including man). Sin is human behaviour directed against God's will and ignoring God's commandments. The notion of sin presupposes the idea of an overbearing, supreme authority (vested in the person of God) who can pronounce judgment and impose penalties upon the breaking of the moral code deriving from him. The pantheon of the Little Tradition does not contain such a divine figure: the saints and the Virgin Mary are accorded the role and status of patron and not that of creator of the world and absolute power.

Of course, God is believed to be the creator of the world within the Great Tradition. The Fourni people, if asked who created the world, will respond that God did. But I would argue that they 'are acquainted' with the idea of God as the Creator while they do not 'believe' in God as the creator of the world. This distinction is most significant. The Great Tradition is an imported tradition, external to the culture of Fourni society. The Christian doctrine of the Great Tradition is taught to these people by the church and the school; but it is not their own system of religious ideas, relating to the social structure of

their society. The Little Tradition is their own indigenous religious system instead. And the Little Tradition does not project the idea of God as the creator of the world with all the concomitants of this belief. Actually, God does not figure in the Little Tradition at all. This is what I mean when I say that Fourni people 'are acquainted' with the idea of God as the Creator but do not 'believe' it. God as creator of the world, as well as His concomitant absolute power and His pronouncement of a supreme moral code, are not part of the Fourni people's religious system. Hence the absence of the notion of sin within the Little Tradition.

c) Malevolent Supernatural Forces

The Little Tradition, in addition to the belief system figuring the benevolent pantheon of saints and the Virgin Mary, also involves beliefs in malevolent supernatural forces. A world of evil spirits and ghosts constitutes the cast of a distinct conceptual schema within the Little Tradition.

The ghosts are those of people found dead on various places around the island. Mostly it is drowned men found on the seashore, but there are also cases of sudden death due to some other cause on a spot outside the village limits. Such people have been buried at the place where their bodies were found, without the performance of a burial ritual by the priest. The villagers believe that because 'they have been buried without a reading' (οταν χωνονται αδιαβαστοι) their souls cannot rest in peace and still linger in those places. They are referred to as 'the drowned' (οι πλυμενοι) and people avoid 'the sites with drowned men' (τα μερη με πλυμενους) out of fear. Many villagers (both male and female)

who have happened to visit such places have reported a variety of strange sounds made by 'the souls of the drowned' (απο τις ψυχες των πνιμενων). These places are not considered actually dangerous and the restless souls are not harmful. Still, the villagers avoid them because they feel uneasy at proximity with the souls of people who have not had a burial ceremony. As they say, 'You get the shivers' (ντηριεσαι) at the strange sounds that occur at 'haunted sites' (μερη που φανταζει): 'It is the drowned man who gets up and shouts' (σηκωνεται ο πνιμενος και φωναζει).

I will list briefly the sites which are said to be haunted, and the related stories.

1. A small beach called skilomandra (Σκυλομαντρα - Dog Pen). A Married couple went there: the husband would be fishing in his small boat, while the wife would collect limpets. Every time she stooped to prise one off the rocks with a knife, she would hear a clapping. She then remembered that a drowned stranger had been found there and had been buried on the spot 'without a reading by the priest' (αδειαβαστος). She realized, as she said to me, that the clapping was made by his soul which was still there. Accordingly, she immediately left that place, extremely scared.
2. Four villagers were fishing near the shore when they heard a roaring sound. They thought at first that it was a dolphin, but then one of them remembered that a young boy out shepherding had fallen down the cliff, had drowned and been buried without a burial ceremony. Quite often fishermen sailing by that spot called 'the cliff' (ο γκρεμος) hear the boy's groaning.



3. On the small nearby island of Anthropofas (Ανθρωποφάγος η Ανθρωποφας - The Man-eater) there are buried sponge-divers (from the island of Kalymnos) who died of asphyxia in the water. There are several stories by various villagers who have visited that island reporting roaring sounds, Kalymnian songs, shouts and calling of names, whistling. The island is believed to be haunted by the restless souls of the sponge-divers who have been buried there without a proper death ritual.
4. Two young men had gone to the site Agrelithi (Αγρελιθι) to fetch some sheep back to the village. They heard someone calling the name of one of them. They asked who it was (they could not see anyone as it was getting dark), and the voice answered a certain name. Then they heard someone's breath behind them. They rushed into a nearby house and shut the door. The ghost roared and jumped on the roof. One of the men shot at the roof with a gun and the ghost disappeared. They say it must have been the ghost of a villager who had died in that house of tuberculosis and had been buried nearby without a burial ceremony by the priest.
5. A young girl had died near the mills, just outside the village limits. She had been properly buried in the cemetery, but the priest 'had not read' at the spot where she had died (i.e., he had not performed a purifying ritual at the place of her death). One night, a village woman saw that girl near the mills with her arm raised up in greeting. She realized it was the girl's ghost, because, as she explained to me, 'A raised arm beckoning you twice is a ghost, while when it beckons three times it is not'.

6. A site called the 'German' on the Makronisi island (Μακρονήσι - The Long Island) is always avoided by the villagers because a dead German was found there during World War II and was buried on the spot.
7. The site Asprovouni (Ασπροβουνί - The White Mountain) on the island of St. Minas is similarly avoided because a dead Turk was found there at the beginning of the century.
8. Two sites both called 'the drowned man' (ο πνιμενος), one near Koumara and the other near the village of Chrisomilia, are also believed to be haunted by drowned men found and buried on the spot. The same holds for the site Kasithi (στον Κασιδί - the hairless head) where a bald stranger was found drowned.
9. Finally, there is a site named after a female, 'of Flouria' (της Φλουριάς). A village woman was killed there, some say by ghosts, some say by demons. The site is right next to the cemetery. Some villagers can hear the old woman's moaning and cries there at night-time. And once, two fishermen, sleeping in their boat near that spot, woke up to find that the anchor had been pulled up and was resting on their boat and they were drifting away from that spot.

Then, Fourni people also believe in a world of evil spirits. Villagers wandering in open country, away from the village boundaries, have encountered strange apparitions of an evil nature. The conceptual scheme projecting evil spirits is rather vague, lacking any consistent classification and structure. Its only consistent theme is that various places on the island, outside the village, are 'harmed' (βλαμμενα): they are places

where harm may befall man. Spots with springs, torrents, and rich plantations are the places believed to be natural habitats of evil spirits: 'harmed sites' (βλαμενο μερος). These spots are, however, small and scarce on this basically bare, rocky island. Apart from this notion, there does not seem to exist any consistent classification of space (i.e., what parts of the open country are 'harmed'), or time (i.e., harm befalling at specific times).

These evil spirits, as I call them, seem to assume a variety of forms, including:

1. The renowned 'ghost of Petrokopio' (το στοιχειο) residing by the torrent of Petrokopio, is reported as a 'black thing, as big as a house, with one big eye, and magnetic power'. Others say it is a very big black male horse which kills any other horse brought on the island, except mules and gelded horses.
2. Another story relates the appearance of 'a black thing' coming out of a cave and jumping on a passing fishing boat. The fisherman crossed himself and called St. Minas (the ejaculation 'My St. Minas' which involves appeal to the saint's help), upon which 'that thing blasted and hit him like an explosion'. The man was found unconscious and was administered boiled ash (θολοσταχτη), but was left a hunchback for life.
3. Another villager went fishing and came ashore at a lonely spot. A whistling sound came from behind him and rendered him paralysed and mute for life. They say he later explained what had happened to him on a piece of paper.
4. Another story refers to a 'ghost with the form of a man' and a face with stripes of different colours (τα μουτρα του ηταν βεννες-βεννες, κοκκινο, πρασινο, και κιτρινο).

5. Another ghost reported had the form of a small white cow with big red spots.
6. An old woman went one night to water her garden. She heard someone behind her teasing her in sexual terms, but she could not see anyone. She crossed herself and appealed to Virgin Mary: 'Come and help me, my Virgin Mary'. The invisible ghost spat on her. When she was later approaching the village, he reappeared and said, 'Here I am again. I am going to catch you'. But the old woman happened to have an amulet with a piece of the Holy Wood of the Cross from Jerusalem. And the ghost told her, 'You are lucky because you have this bit', and vanished.
7. In another story, an old woman, who lived all alone in a hut outside the village, saw a goat with the head of a man. It was the devil, laughing and announcing, 'I will blast you, old woman' (Θα σε σκάσω, γρία). She rushed into the house and fetched the icons, at the sight of which the devil burst.
8. An old man went to look at his goats one night. One of them got up on its hind legs and grabbed the man by the shoulders. It was the devil. That incident rendered the man deaf and half-crazy for the rest of his life.
9. An old woman was seriously ill in bed. At a moment when she was left unattended, they say that ghosts (others say the demons) carried her away, tore her clothes to pieces, covered her whole body with scratches and bites, and finally drowned her in the sea near the cemetery. Spots of blood spread along the way as the ghosts, or demons, were dragging the old woman away,

led the villagers to her place of death. It is the so-called 'of Flouria' site, which as I mentioned in the ghost stories, is haunted by the old woman's soul.

Considering the data on ghost stories and stories of evil spirits, the general conclusion seems to be that the grounds beyond the boundaries of the village are inhabited by frightening and evil supernatural forces.

The villagers refer to all such stories under the heading of ghosts. But I have separated them into two distinct categories for analytical reasons which will become more evident in my following discussion of this conceptual schema. I have distinguished on the one hand the ghost stories associated with places where dead people have been found and their souls (i.e., their ghosts) still linger there; and on the other hand the stories in which there is no such association and there is no specific reason advanced as to why a certain place is 'harmed'. This latter category of ghost stories I have labelled stories of evil spirits, which is not a term employed by the villagers, but I have introduced it myself for the sake of distinction. I believe that the Fourni people, although they use the cover term ghost stories, actually do distinguish between these two set of evil phenomena on an unconscious plane, because they consistently refer to sites where dead people have been found as 'haunted sites' (μέρη που φανταζει) while they refer to sites which are not associated with death, but where evil may befall humans as 'harmed sites' (βλαμμενα μέρη). Therefore, I think that, even from their point of view, my distinction is valid.

The ghosts are the souls of people who died outside the village boundaries and have not had a burial ritual. They have never actually harmed anyone approaching their 'haunted' habitat. The evil spirits

are diverse evil apparitions (only the devil is conceptualized in the specific form of a goat) that do seek to harm humans. Appeal to the benevolent divine pantheon (the saints and the Virgin Mary), the Holy Icons, the sign of the cross, as well as secular weapons such as guns, intimidate and even destroy these evil spirits.

It is obvious, I think, that we have here two distinct sets of malevolent phenomena. And I would argue that their difference in content relates to a difference in the conceptual models upon which they draw and for which we have to seek a theoretical analysis. In other words, the ghost stories and the stories of evil spirits mix two distinct sets of ideas in the Fourni society's effort to grasp, conceptualize and express social relations and the world order.

In the Great Tradition, evil is represented by the Devil and his followers (other angels who also failed to obtain God's favour). In the Little Tradition, the devils figure only as one more malevolent force within a large world of ghosts and evil spirits. We have a degradation of the role of Devil in the same way as we have a degradation of the benevolent divine (i.e., the absence of God and Christ from the pantheon of the Little Tradition). I think that this phenomenon can be related to my earlier discussion on the absence of the notion of sin in the Little Tradition. In the Christian doctrine, the Devil is the symbol of rebellion against God's will and commandments. By ignoring God's supremacy and prescription of a moral code for his creatures to live by, the Devil represents the commission of sin. But the notion of sin is absent within the Little Tradition, and accordingly the Devil is not the leading Evil figure in it. I think that this degradation of the role of the Devil offers additional support to my argument on the association of the notion

of sin, a moral code prescribed by the divine, and God's supreme power in His role as the Creator.

If, then, the world of ghosts and evil spirits is not connected to a belief of divine punishment for sin, what does it represent? My view is that evil spirits and ghost stories represent the Fourni delimitation between 'culture' and 'nature', by which I mean the distinction between what is under social control and what is outside social control. Although the people of Fourni do not make such a distinction explicit, it is clearly implicit in practices and the way they talk. 'Culture' includes what falls within social control (i.e., in the sense of human intervention) either within the domain of natural phenomena or the domain of social life, irrespective of whether it is located within the natural environment or society. For example, the sun, the seasons, birth and death, are natural phenomena but belong to 'culture'; whilst twins, suicide, the breaking of taboos are not classified as 'cultural' in certain societies. In other words, the boundary between 'culture' and 'nature' is not conceptualized in terms of physical limits (biological facts, geographical boundaries, etc.), but instead in terms of the extent of human control over nature and society.

In Fourni, evil spirits represent the differentiation between culture and undomesticated nature, while ghosts represent the differentiation between culture and death outside culture. They both represent the community delimitation between 'culture' and 'nature', but evil spirits refer to that part of the natural environment that lies outside social control, while ghosts refer to cases of death that occur outside social control.

Evil spirit stories refer to the realm of undomesticated nature: country places outside the limits of the community and outside the area of social control. Undomesticated nature arouses in the people of Fourni feelings of anxiety and the fear of the unpredictable. Their relationship with undomesticated nature is one of estrangement and fear. When stepping outside the community limits into the surrounding open country (including the sea), the villagers leave the domain on which they exert control and enter the domain of unpredictable, uncontrollable and dangerous undomesticated nature. Therefore, for them, the open country beyond the village limits contains so-called 'harmed places', places inhabited by evil, harmful forces.

Ghost stories refer to cases of death that occur outside social control. They are cases of death that occurred away from the community, were not soon enough noticed by the villagers and, consequently, were not dealt with according to the cultural norms, i.e., they did not have the death rites of passage and a ritual burial. Death which does not take place in the presence of the society, does not belong to the sphere of the social any more.

Men found drowned or dead from other causes on sites beyond the village boundaries are not taken to be buried in the cemetery (irrespective of whether they are villagers or strangers). All members of the community enter it in a social way by rites of passage, and must leave it in a social way by other rites of passage. Men dying in the domain of the undomesticated do not leave society in the appropriate social way, by rites of passage. And, since they are already dead, they cannot be carried back across the boundary between 'culture' and 'nature': they cannot be brought to be buried in the cemetery, they cannot undergo



a purification rite and the cannot be given a ritual burial. They have crossed the boundary into 'nature' and they must remain within it: they are buried on the spot where they are found without rites of passage.

It is indicative and characteristic that the only instance in ghost stories of a person dying outside the village and accorded a burial ceremony in the cemetery is the story of a young girl who died just outside the village outskirts; her death occurred in the presence of other villagers, and she was immediately carried into the village (i.e., her body was not discovered after death).

The villagers of Fourni believe that people who see ghosts 'have a weak guardian' (ο φυλακας είναι αδυνατος). That implies that the benevolent divine forces (the pantheon of the local saints and the Virgin Mary) are also supposed to protect man from the harm that the evil spirits can cause. It looks as if we have here a form of 'guardian angel' personified in the benevolent spirit, attached to the individual 'during the rites of passage that concern integration into the community, and representing community attendance. Here the protecting spirit, or guardian angel, may be identified with forces of social cohesion or even assume the form of a patron saint or a spirit with whom the individual has personal contact. The individual cannot exert control on his 'guardian' or use him for specific purposes (just as the individual cannot control or use the community), but expects spontaneous attendance and protection from him. Fourni people believe that the saints (at least, a particular one for each individual) are omnipresent and look after them. Their protection includes protection from evil spirits. Therefore, a person who encounters a ghost is obviously not protected enough: 'He has a weak guardian'. We find

here an interplay of the major beliefs of the Little Tradition: the personal contact between the divine and the individual, the expectation of protection from the pantheon of saints, the patronage relationship between the devout and the divine, the omnipresence of a saint selected as personal patron by man's side.

d) The Relationship between the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition

Hence, in Fourni we encounter two distinct religious systems, the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition, as I have described them. The question remaining is what is the relationship between these two and what role each has in this society.

The Great Tradition consists of the Orthodox Christian religion (shared by all Greek communities) in the specific form in which it has been accommodated within Fourni society. The Little Tradition derives its themes and symbols from Christianity, but has developed in an autonomous ideology on the basis of the social constraints of the relatively new settlement of Fourni and in accordance with its emerging social structure.

The first settlers brought the Great Tradition from their communities of origin. However, in the new community of Fourni, the Great Tradition did not resume the prominent role it might have had in those communities. In the case of Fourni, we did not have group migration from one community to a new settlement, in which circumstances the traditions this group carries from their community of origin acquire special importance in promoting social cohesion during the building of the new society. Instead, we had individuals coming from different places all over Greece, and what is more, individuals who had been marginal social actors: they

were forced to leave their communities because they had acted against the social law and social customs. This is one of the major factors that have contributed to the fact that the Fourni community developed from scratch, in its own autonomous way - not only on the place of religion, but in so many other social areas too.

Hence, the emerging society of Fourni developed its own Little Tradition, a Christian-based religious system which however involves its own distinct semantics, structure and function along a line consistent with this community's social organization. At the same time, as there was no pressure from a strong tradition carried along during the formation of the new society (for the reasons I have mentioned), the Great Tradition was accorded a secondary role in social life.

I would argue that the relationship between the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition could be seen schematically as analogous to the relationship between a dead and a living language in linguistics; for example, as in Europe up to the fifteenth century, where Latin was the written language while the spoken language consisted of various national varieties. It is the difference between a logical conceptual system that has lost its links to social life and has been deprived of the level of social relations to which it responds, and a belief system that derives its vitality from its constant interplay with the level of reality in response to social needs.

The Little Tradition is constantly reproduced on the ideological plane by the dramatic field of dreams, miraculous icons, apparitions, stories of saintly punishment, ghosts, and evil spirits. But the Great Tradition is lacking on the place of ideological reproduction.

As I have discussed in the previous chapter, Fourni villagers have only a minimal knowledge of the Bible stories and especially of the symbolisms and exegesis the Orthodox Christian doctrine involves. Within the household, children grow into an apprehension of the existence of the divine, but they are mainly acquainted with the Little Tradition. Religious education in the Great Tradition has been undertaken by the state primary school (a high school was established only in 1980), where children learn a few of the stories in the Bible. Another institution that is also concerned with the ideological reproduction of the Great Tradition is the church. But a crucial point here is that the Greek Orthodox Church does not involve any preaching; in some parts of Greece there is Sunday school in the church for the children, but not in Fourni. The Orthodox Church is limited in the performance of celebrations, ceremonies and rituals. What is more, the Bible and the ecclesiastical hymns recited are in the ancient Greek language (the koine dialect of the Hellenistic period) which is hardly comprehensible to the Fourni villagers. In brief, the church institution in Fourni does not contribute efficiently to the ideological reproduction of the Great Tradition.

Therefore, we see that not only was the Great Tradition accorded a secondary place with the emergence of the Fourni society, but at the same time it almost lacks mechanisms of ideological reproduction. The Fourni community has maintained the Great Tradition, but has chopped off part of it. It has retained the part of celebrations and ritual performances while dropping its theological doctrine. In place of it, it has generated and elaborated a complex folk religious beliefs system, the Little Tradition.

This point is quite evident when we consider the data on the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition. The lack of theological doctrine in the Great Tradition is as striking as the lack of rites and celebrations in the Little Tradition. It seems as though the two parts that constitute any religious system (i.e., beliefs and rituals) have been separated into two realms. We may say, rather schematically, that the relationship between the Great and the Little Traditions is defined by some kind of division of labour: it seems as if the Great Tradition covers primarily the field of religious rites, whereas the Little Tradition has undertaken the field of religious beliefs.

In that sense, the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition complement each other, together constituting a religious whole. This explains their simultaneous co-existence and their symbiotic compatibility in Fourni society. It also explains why, although these are two distinct religious systems generated under different social constraints, it is sometimes difficult to draw the boundary line between them.

This form of division of labour between the Great and the Little Traditions affected the function of the Great Tradition in one more way. As the Little Tradition developed into the primary domain of religious beliefs, it became the focal point of the sacred, while the Great Tradition manifested a considerably secular character. The ceremonies and rituals of the Great Tradition were dissociated from the religious beliefs that constitute their meaning (as an independent body of religious beliefs was developing within the Little Tradition) and shifted more into the realm of the secular, i.e., in their regulative function in aspects of social organization (preparation of ritual food, communal sharing of food, dancing fiestas, special dressing and standing places in church, etc.).

Thus, we encounter a disproportionate relationship between the secular and the sacred aspects of church ceremonies and their accompanying festival elements: we encounter an augmentation of their secular regulative aspect.

We can look into church attendance as an example. Church attendance in Fourni cannot be described as contrite, solemn attendance. Its aspect as a communal gathering and a social event of secular character has been accentuated. Church ceremonies offer one of the major occasions for competitive display of fashionable clothing and hairstyles (for men, women and children alike). The congregation's attention is drawn to comparisons of dress and appearance, as well as the exchange of local gossip, rather than the church performance. It is noticeable that older women, being usually shabbily dressed, restrict themselves to the rear end of the church, while younger women who have not got a new fashionable dress gather on the balcony above the smartly-dressed congregation, or alternatively will not go to church at all. Men stay inside the church for a short while, and then adjourn to the churchyard to smoke and chat. Children move incessantly at the front part of the church giggling and shouting, and obstructing the performance of the ceremony. The priest is forced every now and then to demand silence and to send the children away. Except at baptisms, weddings and funerals, when the villagers' attention is focused on the subjects of the rite of passage, there is never much concentration on the church performance and the priest's recital or the hymns. Quite probably, the recital of the Bible in ancient Greek accentuates the distraction of the congregation. In brief, one can say that church attendance provides an occasion for communal gathering and socializing, where the

sacred aspect has been noticeably minimized, while the secular aspect is accentuated.

There is an exception, though, in this accentuation of secularity in the Great Tradition. Blessing rites, Purifying rites and Request rites preserve a prominently sacred character. I would hazard the suggestion that this is due to this society's need to emphasize Purification (they all three are Purification rites) because of its geographical and social isolation, the insecurity in its relationship with nature and the need for social cohesion.

The interrelationship of the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition is far from simple. On the one hand, they are distinct religious complexes, generated in different social settings. On the other hand, the Great Tradition has been adapted in the Fourni community through processes of selection in correspondence with its social form and in complementarity to the Little Tradition. The Great Tradition and the Little Tradition are, in that sense, both distinct and interwoven. Each intrudes into the other in a most complex way so as to provide a cohesive religious system for the Fourni people. I have tried to outline the basic points both of distinction and of complementarity between them - perhaps not in as great detail as they deserve, but enough to pursue my main topic of concern, which is the understanding of the male-female relationship in relation to the sphere of religion.

## CHAPTER SIX

MAGICAL BELIEFS, PRACTICES AND RITESa) The Field of Magic in Fourni

Magical beliefs, practices and rites are a deeply rooted tradition in Fourni. They constituted, until lately, a very rich field of social practices, and still retain their significance in our day. Although several of the old practices and rites are gradually fading away as a result of the sudden recent increase of communication with the outside world and the ensuing rapid social change in all areas of social life, magical beliefs and practices still play a vital role in everyday life and especially in the domestic domain.

The island of Fourni was a self-contained, isolated community until very recently, when communication with the outer world became easy and frequent. The villagers had no contact with technological and scientific progress and until recently retained their own cognitive system consistent with their level of social and technological development.

Technological and scientific developments are a feature of the world outside this community, a feature slightly known and heard of (through the recent introduction of television and other media) but not really belonging to Fourni. Hence, magic is still very much alive (though of course on a declining scale as social change is about to burst out on a large scale very soon) and has a longstanding tradition.

What essentially distinguishes man from other beings is said to be his constant effort to order and control his natural and social environment. Magical beliefs, practices and rites constitute a community's effort to determine and control its relationship and its interaction with the natural and social environment. In Fourni, magic is to a great extent



employed in an effort to subjugate natural hazard and fight for survival. By attributing illness, unexpected death and general misfortune to magical and mystical causes, and trying to counteract them through preventive and protective magic, Fourni people attempt to deal with natural forces and intervene in what is actually beyond their power.

Magic in Fourni derives from a repertoire of long tradition in the Aegean area and surrounding geographical area. The community of Fourni has elaborated three major fields of magical enterprises:

1. The field of magico-medical practices.
2. The field of preventive and protective magic which concerns the domestic domain.
3. The field of witchcraft and sorcery, and the magic employed to counteract these.

In addition, we encounter magic beliefs, practices and rites that concern the three major transition stages for the community of Fourni, namely, childbirth, weddings and death. Rites of passage determine social relations, the individual's relations with society. In Fourni, rites of passage, although dealt with independently by the Great Tradition, also constitute a primary field of magic enterprises. Here, magic also assumes a prominent role in controlling social phenomena, specifically the integration of the individual into the community and the allotment of social statuses in it.

b) The Magico-medical

As we have said, the island of Fourni developed as a self-contained, isolated community, and communication with the outer world has become easier and more frequent only during recent years. Consequently, these

people had to face illness, accidents and unexpected death on their own, by means consistent with their own level of technological and social development. Magical beliefs and practices offered just such a means.

Cosmopolitan medicine was introduced quite early to Fourni in the person of a state-appointed doctor who would be replaced every four to six years. It seems that this institution dates at least to the beginning of the century: the eldest members of the community remember having a doctor on the island ever since they were young children themselves. Today, there is also a nurse and a trained midwife helping the doctor.

However, even in our days, the villagers of Fourni exhibit a marked mistrust of scientific medicine. They will resort to the doctor only in cases of severe illness, and even then, they will not rely wholeheartedly on the doctor's prescriptions, and will also seek help in the old magico-medical practices.

The question arising is why these people continue to rely so heavily on their own magico-medical devices, while there has been a trained doctor on the island since around the beginning of the century. On the one hand, there is the relentless power of social tradition to resist anything new. On the other, there is a certain extent of failure and non-effectiveness on the doctor's part because of the difficulties in having both at least a minimal stock of medicines (due to inadequate funding by the state), and access to hospital equipment (which is subject to problems with transportation and communication with urban centres). A doctor on his own, with an adequate supply of medicines and without even the minimal hospital equipment for emergency cases, could not ultimately offer much help to the villagers. Hence, disappointment

and disillusion in cases of sudden severe illness and emergency cases led to a deep mistrust of doctors' advice and the continuation of the deeply rooted recourse to the indigenous magico-medical practices.

Even though now access to the hospitals in the urban centres is relatively easy (in an emergency the community president calls for a helicopter and the sick person is soon transported to a hospital), people's mistrust of scientific medicine has continued in our day. The reason is that they more or less expected hospital doctors to perform miracles and save their lives every time. At the time, their attitude of mistrust towards scientific medicine, together with their minimal, or non-existent knowledge of hygiene, and simple biology, makes them run to hospital doctors only when things have got beyond them, and, in the majority of cases, when it is actually too late for a cure. In the end, it all leads to a vicious circle. As they say:

- What's the good in going to a hospital doctor, if it is only to kill you?

Or again,

- If you go to a doctor, he is going to find something or another. Doctors always kill you in the end.

Their attitude is that of the ostrich; they choose to stay away from doctors, so that they are not faced by the anxiety of the doctor's discovery of some ailment. They seem to believe that no ailment is of any consequence unless the doctor finds out about it - actually, as if the doctor is a conjuror who makes the ailment appear in the first place and at the same time give it its terrifying character.

In addition, hospitals are part of a strange world that the individual has to face all alone, cut off from community ties and community support, and even most significantly isolated from his kinship cocoon.

Accordingly, the indigenous complex of magico-medical beliefs and practices retains a great deal of its rigour on Fourni today. Many of my informants firmly stated that they have far greater faith in the so-called 'practical methods' (τα πρακτικά) rather than in doctors and scientific medicine. Some argue that people who have kept to modern medicine have come to regret it. And then, after all, the old and elaborate magico-medical knowledge has such a long tradition and deep roots in the past, that it could not be lightly thrown aside from one moment to the next with the coming of scientific medicine.

The fact is that in personal hygiene, child-rearing and common ailments, the villagers of Fourni choose to rely on the old magico-medical tradition. In cases of severe illness when they cannot find relief in the magico-medical practices, they will seek refuge in hospital help. However, nowadays a great number of younger people are starting to realize the importance of scientific medicine, and there is a gradual, though still hesitant, shift towards a greater reliance on it. Their first step is to ask the local doctor's advice more often, especially on their children's health. A few go as far as to take their young children occasionally for a visit to a paediatrician in the urban centres.

The greatest change concerns childbirth. Since 1960 all women have given birth in a hospital in Athens or in the large nearby island of Samos. However, there are still a few who choose to have a second or third birth at home, with the help of the trained midwife.

The village midwives used to be the main magico-medical specialists. They would treat stomach and abdominal attacks, back pains, broken bones, swollen legs, minor wounds, boils, blisters, muscle pain, arthritis, and so on. Their stock of 'medicines' included herbs, bran, animal products, octopus, and other edibles.

Swollen legs, for example, were cured with a mixture of octopus, bran and chicken fat. Crushed onions would be placed on some hurting part of the body to soothe acute pain. For a delicate baby that had had a difficult birth, the midwife would tie a scarf round its head and put on the inside of the scarf cinnamon and a piece of cottonwool, well soaked in 'ouzo' (an alcoholic drink).

Apart from the midwives, a few older women also claimed to possess magico-medical knowledge for treating various pains and ailments. Also, an old man (now long deceased) is said to have been a magico-medical practitioner. Another professed to be a specialist in treating hepatitis: he would scrape the rear part from under the tongue with a razor.

Apart from the specialists, all the village women more or less engage in magico-medical practices. Every female household head undertakes the task of providing means of treatment and soothing pain whenever one of her family members gets sick. We see here women's traditional motherly role extending into another field of activity: the responsibility for the physical welfare of her family members. As one of my informants put it most succinctly, 'Our mother was our own doctor'.

Women possess enough magico-medical knowledge to cure minor ailments, as well as all the necessary knowledge for bringing up young children. Such knowledge is transmitted from mother to daughter, and although the magico-medical practices for the welfare of the family members are an exclusively female task, men also come to acquire some of that knowledge in their occasional roles as the recipients of treatment.

The women's magico-medical practices largely rely on the therapeutical and analgesic properties of various herbs (some of them actual, others imaginary). They would collect such herbs from the hills around the village each time they went for a short expedition for gathering wild edible vegetables.

The range of herbs, wild plants and other substances employed by the women for magico-medical purposes is quite large, and I will mention only a few here for illustration.

A certain herb called 'thespinohorto' (θεσπινοχορτο) is considered a cure for high blood pressure and kidney trouble. Camomile and various types of tea herbs are used to alleviate stomach pains and vomiting. Oregano, when boiled in water, has the property of stopping diarrhoea. A plant called 'kolitsa' (κολλιτσα) is ground to provide a fine powder called 'koniza' (κονιζα), which is employed on any type of minor wound. The leaves of the tree 'doctor', growing in the hills surrounding the village, are soaked in olive oil and applied to a type of blister called the 'blacks'. The fruits of the plane tree are boiled and the liquid extract is given to babies suffering from diarrhoea. A herb called 'apiganos' (απηγανος) gives a potion which the middle-aged women of today used to drink when they were pregnant and wished to have a miscarriage.

Women's magico-medical practices are not restricted to the use of herbs and wild plants. A mixture of ash and water, well strained, gives a drink used to soothe people who have had a fright. A drink of petrol diluted in water is supposed to cure influenza. A mixture of cane scraps, sugar and green soap (a soap made of olive oil and ash) was thought the best treatment for all kinds of blisters. Chilblains and haemorrhoids are soothed by washing with sea water. Rubbing with white spirit or 'ouzo' is a common method for the relief of abdominal trouble and back pain. A small quantity of 'ouzo' held in the mouth for a while eases toothache. A spoonful of crushed garlic and milk is believed to treat intestinal amoeba. Mothers sprinkle their young

children's hair with a mixture of camphor and white spirit to discourage lice.

If a fish bone were to get stuck in a young child's throat, some mothers would bring a cat along! The cat's mouth was placed upon the child's mouth and was supposed to act as a magnet and attract the fish bone out of the child's mouth. Other household members or neighbours would assist in the 'treatment' by holding the child when the cat's mouth was put close to his own.

A lot of these practices are effective, and even when they are not, the belief in their effectiveness makes the patient feel better. But even when some magico-medical practice fails to provide results, the fact does not alter the villagers' deep faith in the magico-medical tradition.

One of my informants related to me a story of failed treatment. When she was a child, her eyes bled very frequently. Her mother used to take her to an oven (a small conical stone building where they bake bread and other meals), take the cloth used for sweeping the ashes, immerse it in hot water and cleanse the child's eyes with it. That practice never actually cured her. Years later, a travelling doctor gave her eye drops which treated her eye trouble.

When I urged my informant to acknowledge the unreliability of magico-medical practices on the grounds of her story, she became evasive to such an extent that I could not even make her straightforwardly admit the failure of the particular case she had just related to me. Magico-medical beliefs are a very deeply rooted tradition in Fourni mentality and, although a large number of the practices are gradually fading away nowadays, many others retain their rigour, and the value attributed to the magico-medical tradition in general is still very high,

An extensive field of such practices that is still very much alive today, concerns the care of babies and young children. The older village women believe that their own experiences and practices in bringing up children are the best guide for new mothers of today; after all, they can argue, their own grown-up and healthy children are living proof of the supremacy of their magico-medical methods over the ignorance of doctors, 'who do not have any experience in the actual bringing up of children and derive all their advice from books'.

The physical care of babies relies on a very wide range of magico-medical beliefs and practices, extending from notions concerning the nutritive quality of each food to a stock of treatment methods for every possible physical upset or illness a young child may have. Even nowadays, young mothers do not seek the doctor's advice and rely exclusively on their own mothers' advice for the care of the youngsters.

A newborn baby is swaddled in a rectangular piece of cotton cloth that keeps the hands clasped on the body and the feet outstretched. This practice is reckoned to help the baby relax and also helps to develop straight legs.

Newborn babies are fed on milk. Today, many of the younger mothers no longer breastfeed their children, and employ 'formula' milk which they consider more highly nutritive. In addition, they give the child camomile twice a day (to ease intestinal troubles) and the watery extract of boiled rice which they regard as even more nutritive than milk.

Whenever the baby seems to have a bad abdominal attack, they rub 'ouzo' on its stomach, and if the child keeps crying after this, they think it must be due to muscular cramps, so the mother or a maternal aunt lightly massages the baby's arms and legs. The next thing they



investigate, in the case of a baby that still complains, is earache. They press his ear with their finger, and according to his reactions decide whether that was the trouble. If they still cannot detect the cause of the baby's crying, they give up and pronounce the baby 'irritated', or alternatively, affected by the 'Evil Eye'.

As the baby grows up, they gradually introduce other types of food into its diet. They start with egg yolks, proceed to fruits, and finally soups. Here again, the Fourni women have their own concepts of what type of food is nourishing for young children. For example, they give the child the egg yolk and dispose of the white, and they believe 'all the power' of the fish and meat to be in the soup, and not in the meat and fish themselves.

The ideal for a baby is to be overweight, and whenever too much feeding makes children vomit, the mother or grand mother will immediately force a new large quantity of food into them. When a child does not have much appetite, they block the nose so as to force the child to open its mouth in an effort to take a breath, at which moment they hurriedly force a spoonful into the mouth, still holding the nose tight so that the child is forced to gulp down the food.

Babies are heavily clothed and kept away from draughts and the open air. When taken for a walk, they are wrapped in a blanket (a cotton blanket in summertime) that also fully covers their head and face. In general, mothers tend to take extreme care of their children until the age of two, at which time they let them out in the streets and on their own, and the mother's care gradually fades away.

Formerly, when women did not resort to hospital care for giving birth, miscarriages, abortions and other problems relating to childbirth,

the role of the gynaecologist was the province of the midwife and her magico-medical practices.

The midwife supervised labour and the birth of a child. When the mother of the newborn baby had a haemorrhage after birth, the midwife treated it with a mixture of beaten eggs. The midwife also advised various practices (such as sitting over boiling mixtures of herbs) for bringing about a miscarriage in cases of unwanted pregnancy. In the case of women who faced difficulties in conceiving a baby, the midwife gave herbal potions.

An old woman related to me how she finally succeeded in becoming pregnant following the midwife's instructions. She took three basil leaves, crossed herself three times with them, made a request to Christ ('My Son, cross a child to me' - *Παύδου μου, σταυρώσε μου παιδί*), and then ate the basil leaves.

Finally, the midwife prepared contraceptive ointments and drinks for women with large families to use in addition to other contraception methods (such as withdrawal).

#### c) Life History of the Midwife

The latest and most famous midwife in the village of Fourni was a small woman, with an exceptionally strong and radiant personality, called Angelinio. She must have been born some time around the beginning of this century (the village records are not quite certain in her case because she was not born on Fourni), and she died within the first year of my research, at what they said was the age of eighty-five.

The midwife practising in Fourni before her was her maternal aunt. She had married a man in Fourni, and because she had no children of her

own, she adopted her little niece, and brought her from Patmos to live in Fourni. She would take her to help her midwifery tasks from an early age. Hence, Angelinio became her aunt's successor. She proved exceptionally successful in her practices, both as midwife and as magico-medical practitioner, and soon pushed aside the two other older local midwives who were practising when she started her career.

She married a poor man who was a shepherd and also owned some small plots which he cultivated. They had eight children, two of whom died young. She kept her house and brought up her children without any help and worked very hard at the same time as a midwife. One of the tasks of the midwife, apart from her magico-medical and ritual practices, used to be the washing of the clothes and linen of the women whom she had helped give birth for up to forty days (clothes that were considered as polluted), at the spring at the far end of the village.

She was energetic and hard-working, an authoritarian person of austere character, highly moral, self-contained, indifferent to gossip, and they say that she almost never spent her time socializing with other women. She became one of the most highly respected people in the village. She was paid in cash for her services, but the villagers also gave her many presents of other kinds out of deep gratitude.

She continued her practice until the age of eighty, and they say that very few babies died during delivery during her practice. At her funeral (which took place during my stay in Fourni), almost the whole village, men and women alike, were present as a sign of their deep sympathy and respect for the deceased. It was said that such a large crowd had only gathered before for the funerals of the previous priest and an old local teacher. Some people argued that the crowd present at the midwife's funeral actually outnumbered the other two.

d) Magic for the Protection of the Household

A large part of the complex of magical beliefs and practices in Fourni society concerns the protection, welfare and prosperity of the household. Every female household head engages in magical practices of such scope and makes sure that the local magical beliefs and superstitions concerning home life are observed by herself and her family members.

New Year's Day is an especially auspicious day. On its eve, every house's female head, before going to bed, will throw and break open a pomegranate in the courtyard. This practice ensures good health and prosperity for the household members throughout the coming year.

Some women still practise that old custom of walking to the old village spring (the only water supply before the establishment of a house-to-house water supply system) and carry home a jug of water and a pebble. This water is called the 'silent water' (αμύλητο νερο) since a woman carrying it should not speak at all until she places the jug with the water in the house, or the magical potency of the water will be lost. In even older times, women would go and throw sweets into the spring for good luck. Perhaps this practice is associated with the continuing belief in water spirits, though of course my informants never suggested any such reference, and simply said that the practice brings good luck.

On Easter Sunday, on return from the church after the ritual of the Resurrection at around midnight, the female household head will bring along home the Holy Light (the light given by the priest to the crowd attending the Resurrection ritual to light their candles). Holding the candle, the women make the sign of the cross on the lintel of the entrance

door of their house. One notices that sign of the cross in soot on the lintel of every village house door all the year round. Then the Holy Light is taken into the house, an act regarded as of paramount importance, signifying the household's acceptance of the message of Jesus' Resurrection, a message of the triumph of the heavenly over evil. The sign of the cross on the lintel similarly signifies an extension of the joyful message of Jesus' Resurrection into every house: a message that symbolizes vitality, jubilation and happiness for every household.

Another important magical rite associated with the change of the year and aiming at the household's protection and good luck, dictates the taking of careful precautions as to which person will enter the house first on New Year's Eve. The person who will first cross the threshold on the morning after New Year's eve is supposed to determine the luck factor for the household throughout all the coming year. For that reason, the female household head usually arranges for one of her daughters or another female kinswoman to visit the house very early that morning, before any undesirable, unlucky visitor arrives instead.

Another practice in the olden days was to throw sweets into the village spring. It seems to be a magical practice aimed at satisfying the water spirits and deriving from the community problem of short supply of water. The villagers simply say that it was a practice believed to bring good luck to the village. On the first of May, the household women gather flowers and make a wreath which is to be hung on the front door. The first day of May is a celebration of the arrival of spring and of the re-birth of plant life and fertility in general.

The wreath should ideally be hung on the house front door before sunset: the villagers say that the sun must find the people awake and

active and the wreath in its place. Among the flowers of the wreath, they mix certain plants of symbolic value. There must be a piece of 'amaranth' (μαραθός) to ensure the continuity of life ('so that we won't wither away' - να μην μαραθούμε) and a wild 'garlic bulb' (αγρία σκορδουλα) for protection from the Evil Eye. In addition, there is a wheat ear and a vine leaf, the two most common agricultural products in Greece. Finally, some women add a red ribbon to the wreath to draw a good bride for their unmarried son within the year.

In earlier times, when there was not a bakery in the village and women were making bread themselves, every household would brew a large quantity of yeast to last for making bread throughout the year. The yeast was prepared on a certain day, the Cross Day, on 14 September, which being an auspicious day, ensured the successful brewing of the yeast.

The women in every household also adhere to a set of magical prescriptions and precautions (the so-called superstitions - προληψεις - the Greek word literally means prevention). These delimit a specific order in domestic practices and the employment of domestic utensils. Their regulative role, in what concerns domestic life and social etiquette within it, aims at the protection of the domestic domain. As the villagers themselves say, magical practices can prevent ill-will and misfortune.

The broom, sweeping and salt constitute a symbolic complex pertaining to social interaction within the domestic domain and the behavioural code in exchange visits. The housewife should not sweep the floor in the presence of a visitor, for it implies that she wants to send him/her away (the metaphor involved is that she throws the visitor out in the same way as she does with the dust). Again, if you are bored with an undesirable visitor, you can place the broom upside down, an act that has the magical

property of making the visitors go off soon. After the visit of a villager who insults or curses a member of the household, the housewife sweeps the house and throws salt after the visitor, uttering the magical sentence: 'Take them all with you' (the curses they mean). Neighbours must not borrow salt from each other, and, although there is no native exegesis for this practice, it is obvious that it has to do with the association of salt with hostility.

The broom is also associated with the breaking of the behavioural code in social interaction in another way. Women must not cross over a broom if they want to protect themselves from malicious gossip. 'If you cross over a broom, you will hear all a broom sweeps away' (οσα σερνει η σκουπα).

Finally, the broom and sweeping are associated with the wellbeing of household members. Women should not sweep the floor or throw away rubbish on the evening before the day on which one of the family members leaves on a trip. The metaphor intrinsic in this magical precaution is that in the same way as you throw away the dust and the rubbish, the person on a trip may be thrown away, i.e., meet with an accident or death. Sweeping cannot only dispose of visitors who threaten the members of a household, but may also dispose of the members of the household themselves.

Soap is associated with the behavioural code among the members of a household. Soap must not be handed over (it must be put down and the other person must pick it up) because it provokes quarrelling. Scissors are associated with village interaction. Scissors left with the blades apart provoke malicious gossip, through an association of the open cutting edges of scissors and the power of the mouth: 'People will eat you with their tongues' (σε γλωσσοτρωνε).

A number of other magical prescriptions and precautions regulative of material order within the domestic domain aim at the protection of household members from illness and death. Breaking a mirror, spilling oil on the floor, placing shoes upside down, leaving clothes inside-out, placing the loaf of bread upside down, may all provoke illness or death.

Another set of magical prescriptions regulating household practices are associated with protection from major misfortune. One should not have a bath on Sundays nor cut one's nails on a Wednesday or a Friday. Also, one should never cut one's nails in someone else's house. The breaking of either of these prescriptions may bring misfortune. On the evening before religious celebrations and Name Days as well as on Saturday evenings ideally (Sunday being regarded as a Holy Day), there must not be any knitting, embroidery or sewing, as a demonstration of religious homage. As the villagers' proverb says, 'On the evening before, you have to honour me: on the next morning, you can work' (Αποβραδὶς τιμήσε με, το πρωὶ δουλέψε με). Black cats are a sign of bad luck, and Tuesday is considered a back luck day. Bread is auspicious, being the embodiment of Christ, and must not be thrown away or trodden on.

The Michaelmas celebration (8 November) is an especially auspicious day. People have to be especially careful to do everything in the proper way and observe all the prescriptions relevant to household magic. As they say, 'the saint keeps records' on that day; he notes down the names of the people who do not abide by the above prescriptions (especially the one that dictates that you should not knit, sew or do embroidery on the eve of a Holy Day) and within the year he will take their life.

Then, there is also a body of magical beliefs and practices directed to the protection of family members. Women whose sons or husbands are at sea perform homeopathic magic when a sea storm comes. They



throw the oil from the household oil-lamp (or a chapel oil-lamp) into the sea to calm the storm.

A special rebirth rite is performed at the chapel of St. Marina (the patroness of children) when a child is delicate or constantly ill. On the eve of the celebration day of St. Marina, mother and child walk up the hill to the chapel of St. Marina and spend the night there. In the morning, after the ceremony held by the priest for the celebration of the saint, the mother undresses the child and dresses it in new clothes, leaving the old ones in the chapel.

Every female household head keeps a bottle or jug with Holy Water (taken from the church on Epiphany Day) by the house icon-stand and holy oil-lamp. She herself employs this Holy Water in purification practices throughout the year. Whenever illness, quarrelling, a sudden bad habit of a household member (men's drinking or gambling, for example), domestic accidents, etc., occur, she will sprinkle the household members and the house with Holy Water.

Women are also concerned with providing their family members with charms and amulets. Most individuals possess a golden cross, given to them soon after birth by one of their grandmothers or by the godparent at baptism. The best kind of amulet consists of Holy Myron, grains of earth from the Holy Grave and a wooden cross in a piece of cloth with blue glass beads sewn on within the outside. There are female specialists who make charms by sewing together three pieces of fishing net while pronouncing a magical formula against the Evil Eye. A special charm for the protection of young babies consists of a piece of bread and a seal (of the kind they use to stamp the words 'Jesus Christ protects' on church Holy Bread), which are placed underneath the baby's pillow.

For lack of a seal, the piece of bread (which is believed to be an embodiment of Christ) is used on its own as a magic charm. Blue glass beads (sometimes even stamped so as to look like a blue eye) are charms of special effectiveness against the Evil Eye. When a baby is born with a layer of skin covering the face, it is a sign of good luck. The skin is washed in a stream by the midwife and made into an amulet which is offered to the child's father.

Magic concerning the domestic domain also involves divination practices and oracles. This realm that aims to control future happenings through the power of prediction is a female realm. It includes the divination power attributed to a certain bone of the lamb on the auspicious date of Easter Sunday, attribution of oracular powers to grown-up children when crawling, perception of certain birds' cries as an ill omen, prediction of the future through the 'reading of the coffee cup', and the interpretation of dreams.

On Easter Sunday, a ceremonial dish of stuffed roast lamb is prepared. After the serving of lunch, the female household head picks up a certain thin and flat lamb bone of a triangular shape. That particular bone is called the 'board' (πλυνκίδα) and is supposed to possess the power of divination. The female household head 'reads' it (note that this practice is performed by male household heads instead all over the peninsular Greek villages), she examines it carefully and accordingly pronounces to the family their fate for the ensuing year as far as death is concerned. If there is a 'hole' at the upper front part of the bone (i.e., a shadow or a hollow) it means that a family member will die within the next year. A 'hole' at both sides of the bone denotes that either the female household head or the male household head will die. The 'hole' is a metaphorization of the grave, and as

such it is perceived accordingly as a sign of death. If the bone is 'clean', it means that 'the whole family will be re-united around the Easter table next year'.

A grown-up child that suddenly crawls like a baby (while playing) is immediately asked, 'Are you coming or are you going?' His unnatural posture is associated with a magical potency that gives him the power of an oracle. It is regarded as a symbolic announcement of either the unexpected visit of a guest from over the sea, or the sudden departure of a household member on a trip.

The cries of an owl or of a magpie (το φάουδι) at night or dawn are believed to be an ill omen, predicting death or great misfortune.

The coffee cup is believed to 'print' the future of the individual drinking coffee from it. Women gather in small groups to have coffee in company at least once in the morning and once in the afternoon. On these occasions, when there happens to be present a woman who claims knowledge of 'reading' the coffee cup, all other women will hasten to ask for their future. After drinking the coffee, they place the cup upside down on its saucer and let it drain well. Then the 'fortune-teller' picks up the coffee cup, studies the coffee marks in it, and pronounces her divinations.

The most usual stock of predictions is as follows:

- 'I see a big door', which means that something grand or important will happen to you shortly.
- 'I see a long path', which means difficulties and trouble.
- 'I see an eye', which means that someone wishes to hurt you.
- 'I see a bird', which means that news of some kind will soon reach you.

- 'I see crowns', which means that you will get married soon.
- 'I see a hole in your house roof', which means the imminence of some misfortune in your household.
- 'I see something that you have been expecting to happen in two periods' time', i.e., it may be two days or two months or two seasons, etc.
- 'I see a man', after which various other comments may follow, such as that you hold hands, or that he stands separated from you by some obstacle, etc.

Obviously, all the divinations pronounced by the women who 'read the coffee cup' are rather elusive and vague. A great number of actual events following the 'reading of the coffee cup' are interpreted in terms of predictions given. For example, a woman told me, 'I was told that there was a hole in my house roof, and sure enough, at about that time my little son was suddenly taken ill with bronchitis'. Or, as another woman told me, 'I was told that there was a man in my coffee cup, and it was true since at Christmas my father came home from the States'.

There are a couple of women who are professional experts in this divination practice. Many village women will visit them to have their coffee cups read and pay them for this service. Young girls especially, anxious over a love affair or their chances of getting married, very often resort to these professional women to have their futures predicted.

Finally, there is the belief in the predictive nature of dreams. Women, through interpretation of their daily dreams, accord them power to foretell forthcoming events. Sometimes they explain a somewhat unusual dream in terms of a subsequent unusual happening. But there is also a precise interpretation complex of a set of signs noticed in dreams.

Blood signifies 'the quick' (γονυγορ), a happy event in the very near future.

White figs signify the reception of congratulations (συχαικία), i.e., a joyful event upon which people will congratulate you. Carrying a light signifies happiness.

The death or funeral of someone signifies the assurance of life and vitality for that person. It 'ensures time' (σίγουρενει τον χρόνον). Shit signifies wealth. Black grapes signify tears. Mourning dress signifies worries and misfortune. Money signifies malicious gossip. Carrying a child signifies overwork and exhaustion. The extraction of a tooth signifies death. If there is a feeling of pain during the extraction, it means that a closely related person is going to die. If the extraction is painless, it means that a distant relative is to die. An extinguishing light signifies death. Female genitals signify death. A wedding or a bride signify, when dreamed by an already married woman, that she herself will die.

We see that part of the interpretation of these signs is based on the principle of the reversal of opposites. Actual death is interpreted as vitality: a wedding (which is the joyful rebirth in a new status) is interpreted as death; female genitals (which give life) are interpreted as death. Another part of these signs is interpreted by an association of affiliated ideas: toothache is associated with the pain caused by the death of a closely related person; light is associated with happiness, while its extinction is associated with death; mourning is interpreted as worries and misfortune.

e) Evil Eye and Curses

In the Fourni community, we encounter two methods by which an individual can harm other people by supernatural means. I think we can classify one of them as witchcraft and the other as sorcery. I follow here the classical distinction made between witchcraft as a mystical power inherent in one's personality (hereditary or constitutional) and sorcery as the achievement of evil ends by employment of magical substances or magical spells.

In Fourni, we have on the one hand the realm of curses. Curses are directed towards persons with whom one has hostile relations and whom one wishes to harm. They are believed to be especially potent and are therefore much feared. Especially the curse of a mother on her child is conceived of as a paramount malevolent force. Curses are in that sense the voluntary employment of magical spells directed to the achievement of evil. Thus, I would classify them as a form of sorcery.

On the other hand, we encounter the realm of the Evil Eye. The Evil Eye is a mystical power inherent in certain individuals. Praise and admiration as well as envy and desire are the circumstances under which this mystical power is provoked and can harm the object of praise or envy. It is independent of the individual's will and not consciously directed to the achievement of evil. In that sense, I think we can classify the Evil Eye as a form of witchcraft.

Curses are magical spells that can be used by anyone. They are intended to bring misfortune or death on any person whose talk or actions come against the household's interests. There are some people who are believed to be more capable than others of achieving evil ends by the employment of this magical means. The villagers say, 'It's

better not to fall on his/her tongue', and 'His/her tongue is catching' (να μην πεσεις στην γλωσσα του η η γλωσσα του πινηλ).

The magical power of curses derives from their semantics, which consists of a call of death. The villagers believe that by wishing and requesting a person's death through the magical formula of curses, they can actually provoke death.

The magical formulae to which are attributed the power of achieving evil and death are the following:

- 'Let next year miss you' (they all have an abbreviated syntactic form of the grammatical sentence, 'I wish you that such a misfortune befalls you' (Που να μην σ εβρει ο χρονος).
- 'Let you be missing on St. X's day', i.e., the victim's name day (Που να λειψει του Αγλου Ταδε).
- 'Let God Will it and let him be put into his grave' (Που να δωσει ο θεος και στο μνημα του να τον βαλουνε).
- 'Let your bones not disintegrate', i.e., in the grave after your death (Που να μην λειωσουν τα κοκκαλα σου).
- 'Let the priest seal it for you', i.e., that you die and the priest performs the memorial service, and thus your mouth is sealed for ever (Ε, που να σου το φραξει ο παπας).
- 'Let cancer consume you' (Που να σε φαι ο καρκινος).
- 'Let he be cursed, the man who put your seed', i.e., your father (Βρε αναθεμα που σ εσειρε).
- 'Let you be bestowed all the sins' (Που να χεις ολες τις αμαρτιες).
- 'Let you meet your bad year', i.e., that you die within the year (Βρε κακο χρονο ναχεις).

This magical language employed against neighbours and other fellow villagers who threaten a household's interests, belongs almost exclusively to the female domain. I very rarely heard men curse in such terms, and even then not face to face with a person.

Also, they did not shout the curse as women always do, but said it almost under their breath. Men usually will curse in a different language, which includes instances such as:

- 'Go to Hell'
- 'I fuck your Virgin Mary'
- 'I fuck your mother'
- 'I fuck the father who made you'
- 'I fuck the cunt that threw you out'.

I have already described that type of cursing (which is based on the magical potency attributed to sexual inferences) more fully in another chapter. Women also employ this type of cursing language, the difference lying in that the repertoire of curses I described above is not simply insults denoting a person's anger and hostile feelings, but rather the insults are a form of sorcery since they are believed to carry effectiveness and their scope is to bring misfortune or death upon the selected victim.

The belief in the Evil Eye is a most prominent feature within Fourni magic. The provocation of harm attributed to the mystical power of possessing 'a catching eye' (να πλανετ το ματ του) is an instance of witchcraft. But there is also an elaborate complex of related beliefs, practices and rites which belong to protective magic: they aim to avert this form of witchcraft, guard the persons who are most vulnerable to it (persons in transition stages of the life-cycle, for example), and cure individuals affected by it.



The villagers of Fourni believe that every individual is endowed with either good luck (καλοτυχος, καλογουρος), or bad luck (κακοτυχος, κακογουρος). Good or bad luck 'is written in his destiny' (ειναι γραμμενο στη μοιρα του) and directs his life. One's destiny (moira) is determined on the third day after birth when the three Fates (Moiros) visit the newborn baby's cradle to 'write his/her destiny'. Good or bad luck is mystical power that influences a person's life. What is more, it may influence natural phenomena more generally. A person is classified as carrying good luck according to the way his presence may coincide with good or ill phenomena, for example, illness, death, good or bad weather, successful fishing, a marriage proposal, the conception of a child, etc. I myself was held to belong to the category of people carrying good luck because my second visit to Fourni coincided with the coming of heavy and prolonged rainfall which is scarce and much needed.

In addition to this mystical power of good or bad luck, people may also be endowed with the malevolent mystical power of the Evil Eye, that can cause grave harm to others. It is a power residing within the individual and provoked into action by feelings of sheer admiration or envy. It is a power one cannot acquire, use at will, or control.

One can cast the 'evil eye' (να ματιασει) when 'desiring' (λεχεται) or 'admiring' (εγκαρδωνεται) some other person's natural qualities (beauty, intelligence, special skills, health), property (wealth, a plentiful garden, a tree full of fruit, highly productive domestic animals, etc.), or good luck (plentiful fishing, a good marriage, etc.).

It follows that lucky people and people with some natural charisma are the prime victims of the malevolent power of the Evil Eye. Also babies and young children, as well as individuals passing through a

life-crisis transitional stage (pregnant women, women who have just given birth, brides and grooms) are highly vulnerable to the Evil Eye.

Anyone may affect others by the Evil Eye. But the Fourni villagers believe that not all the people have the same potency 'in their eye'. There are people who never affect others by the Evil Eye: 'Their eye does not catch' (το ματι τους δεν πлавει). There are people who can affect others by the Evil Eye occasionally (still unintentionally); 'Their eye catches sometimes' (το ματι τους πлавει μερικες φορες). And there are people who have a reputation for regularly affecting others by the Evil Eye; 'Their eye catches terribly' (το ματι τους πлавει πολυ).

Such people are singled out by the villagers and are much feared for their unintentional but nevertheless extensive Evil Eye power. Three living such persons have been cited to me by various informants. One is a woman and the other two are men, all of them middle-aged.

One of these men is said to have uprooted a whole tree he was admiring for its plentiful fruits. The other man is said to have caused the death of a she-goat, after admiring the quantity of milk produced and commenting that she gave as much milk as a cow. Again, once he admired someone's cultivation of water-melons, and right after his departure two of the water-melons broke open.

The villagers are so much afraid of the magical power of these people's Evil Eye that they may change their daily schedule upon encounter with them, thinking that otherwise some misfortune may befall them. Fishermen especially may decide not to go out on the sea after having met any of these three persons on their way to their boats.

The main way to protect other people from unintentionally affecting them by the Evil Eye is by adding a magic formula against the Evil Eye every time one admires or praises someone or something. This magic formula is as follows: 'Let him/her not be bewitched' (φτου, να μην αβασμαθελ), or 'Let the Evil Eye not affect him/her/it' (κακο ματι να μην το πιασεν). The villagers' fear of the Evil Eye is so great that whenever someone happens to say a good word about them or one of their family members or some valued possession, they actually demand the adding of the magic formula if the admirer forgets to mention it - and this is especially true in the case of babies.

Another way to safeguard people against the malevolent magical power of the Evil Eye is the use of charms. This method is employed particularly for persons passing through a life-crisis and hence especially vulnerable to evil influences, for example, babies, grooms and brides. Charms are also employed by or for persons who believe they are for some reason more susceptible to the Evil Eye than others, as for example, delicate children, women who have difficulty conceiving children or carrying through a pregnancy successfully, and generally people of poor health.

There are certain women in the village who are specialists in making such charms. They take three tiny pieces of fishing net and sew them together in a certain way while they recite a special magical formula against the Evil Eye.

Other usual charms against the Evil Eye are a blue glass bead and a miniature golden horseshoe which are pinned on the inside of one's clothes (the latter of these two charms is used exclusively for babies and very young children).

The Evil Eye may cause some permanent damage or may start a certain misfortune that can be stopped. For example, the woman who is said 'to have an eye that catches terribly', once took a five-year-old child in her arms. The next day, the child upset a pan with boiling water from the stove, her shoulder and arm were burnt and she was left badly scarred for life. Here the damage caused by the Evil Eye had a permanent effect.

In another case, a visitor to the island (a woman from the nearby island of Kalymnos) admired a beautiful, healthy little girl with rosy cheeks. 'She is so pretty, somebody will take her away from you', she told the mother. Soon afterwards the child got ill and started losing weight. Her mother took her to the miraculous chapel of St. Marina (the children's patroness), then to the miraculous Virgin Church on the island of Tinos, but the little girl would not get any better. Some years later, she suddenly started changing back into a plump and healthy girl. Her mother says that apparently the Kalymnian woman (who was old) must have died at about that time (and hence the potency of her witchcraft died with her).

This is a case where the damage caused by the Evil Eye had only a temporary effect, and, once the person endowed with this mystical power died, the person affected was restored to the exact physical state she was before.

In yet another case, one of the two men who are said to have 'a terribly catching eye, cast it on someone's cultivation of water-melons. The owner of the water-melons asked the man to come back and spit on the water-melons. By spitting and adding the magical words, 'I wish the Evil Eye does not catch it' (φρου, να μην βασκαθει), the person who has cast the Evil Eye can break the spell and restrain its harmful power.

In a few words, the evil eye may cause some permanent damage or only temporary harm. There is no specific factor that determines whether misfortune resulting from the 'catching of the Evil Eye' will be permanent or temporary; rather, it is a matter of chance and 'luck' (το τυχερό του), as the villagers put it.

When the misfortune caused is not of a permanent nature, there are ways to put an end to the witchcraft causing it. One way to break the spell is for the person who has cast the Evil Eye to spit on the victim adding the special magical words. Another way by which the spell is broken is the death of the person who has cast the Evil Eye. A third way is the 'undoing of the Evil Eye' (ξεματιάσμα, ξεμετρήμα), a magic rite performed by female specialists. And finally, a fourth way is by recourse to the priest.

The magical rite for the treatment of the Evil Eye can be performed by women, preferably older widows (i.e., older women who no longer engage in sexual relations). Today, there are five such female specialists on the island. Several younger women also possess the knowledge for performing this rite and actually perform it for minor problems concerning their own family members or close friends. But whenever there is a serious case where Evil Attack is suspected, the villagers will seek the help of the specialists.

There are a number of different variations in the performance of the curing rite of the Evil Eye, differing in the means employed: oil, Holy Myron, a candle, or no special means at all. Accordingly, there are also different names given to these variations: unmaking of the Evil Eye, uncrossing, smoking (ξεματιάσμα, ξεμετρήμα, καπνισμα). The most prevalent and widely used in serious cases is the variation in which the means of detection and curing the Evil Eye is olive oil.

The rite of curing the Evil Eye must not be performed after sunset, or it will not be effective, because when it gets dark, the evil forces are much more active and may hinder the success of the performance of the rite. Only one variation of the rite, a variation performed by the employment of Holy Myrons, does not lose its potency after dusk.

The rite of the treatment of the Evil Eye has two parts. The first part seeks to discover the cause of the victim's suffering. It follows three stages: the first stage checks on the Evil Eye as the possible cause; the second stage checks on malevolent gossip as the possible cause, and the third stage checks on blasphemy as the possible cause. The second part of the rite is the actual treatment, i.e., the counter-magic that can free the victim from the attack.

The patient sits on a chair, and on another chair in front of him there are placed a dish containing water and a cup containing oil. The hands and legs of the person to be cured must be set apart, for crossing them in any way could prevent the effectiveness of the magic of the rite. The specialist woman makes the sign of the cross three times upon the dish. Then she crosses herself three times, and lastly she crosses the patient twelve times.

The first part of the rite starts with her taking three drops of oil by the two middle fingers of her right hand and dropping them one by one into the dish. These drops of oil are the detection means employed: they reveal the cause of the victim's suffering. If the oil drops spread out, it means that the victim has been affected by the Evil Eye. A drop of oil spreading out in the water takes the shape of a more or less large spot which is regarded as the Evil Eye itself. Drops of oil do not always spread out; they often retain

their form and size of a drop. In that case, the Evil Eye does not 'appear' in the water and the specialist can immediately inform her supposed victim that he/she has not been affected by the Evil Eye, and should hence look for the cause of his/her suffering elsewhere.

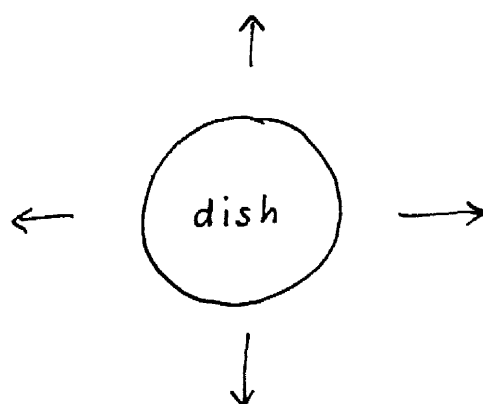
The circumstances of the spreading out of the drops of oil present a very difficult question. A chemist informed me that oil does not normally dilute in water, and thus in his opinion, the specialist must be employing a solvent (perhaps white spirit), which is put in the dish with the water beforehand. Whatever the case, one thing I found out for certain by experiment myself, is that although the oil may spread out the first time, it does not spread out subsequently. That means that unless a solvent is actually used in the water, the probability that the drops of oil will spread out at the second and third stages of the checking part of the rite is small indeed.

In the rite I witnessed, the three drops of the first stage spread out forming large spots, and also a tiny fourth oil spot made its appearance. The large size of the drops of oil indicated Evil Eye attack for quite some time, that had 'grown' upon the victim, as the specialist woman put it. The tiny fourth oil spot meant that the affliction was caused by someone close, i.e., a relative, a close friend, or a neighbour.

The specialist woman proceeded to check on gossip. She dropped three more drops of oil into the water. In this case, these drops also spread out (though not as much as the previous ones), which indicated the malevolent power that springs out of admiration of envious gossip (σε γλωσσοφαγανε).

Then she dropped three more drops of oil. These were to check on blasphemy (βλασφημία). The oil drops did not spread out at all this time; they remained just oil drops in the water. Accordingly, she announced that there had not been any curses or blasphemies against the victim.

She then proceeded to the second part of the rite - the curing part. She made the sign of the cross three times over the water-dish. She plunged the fingers of her right hand into the water, in the middle of the dish, and then slowly drew her hand outwards. This gesture was repeated four times, each time drawing her hand in a different direction so as to complete the sign of the cross as the following diagram illustrates.



Then, she asked the patient to set her legs apart and put her palms flat down on her knees. She plunged her own right-hand fingers into the water, touched the right temple of the patient, then the right palm and then the right ankle, and then she moved her hand away in such a manner as if she was pulling away from the ankle some invisible substance and throwing it behind the chair. She repeated the very same set of gestures for the left side of the body. Then, once again, the same gestures for the right side of the body, so that in all she made that set of gestures three times.



I should note here that the number three derives its auspicious nature from association with the Orthodox Christian practice of making the sign of the cross three times and using the three fingers of the right hand. Throughout the rite for the treatment of the Evil Eye, all gestures are repeated three times; even at the very beginning of the rite, when the specialist woman crosses the person she is curing twelve times, it is only a multiplication of the auspicious number three by the number four.

The rite of the 'undoing' of the Evil Eye does not consist simply of the above described actions. Its more important part is that every gesture is accompanied by the whispering of a magical recital. The specialist recites the magical words under her breath so that they are quite inaudible to the people present; otherwise, the magical words are believed to lose their power.

This magical recital can be communicated to another woman who wants to acquire the knowledge necessary for performing the rite, in either of two ways. One way is to write it down on paper. The other way is by teaching the magical words to a man, who then relates them to the new female initiate. The best of these two ways is thought to be the one where the words are written down. In both cases there must be a man as the intermediary through whom the magical words can be communicated. Men never perform the rite of the magical cure of the Evil Eye, thus, they can function as the neutral vehicle through which the magical recital can be transmitted without losing its potency. The crucial rule, in either case, is that the magical words must not be uttered loudly by a woman to another woman, or they will lose their potency.

There are two distinct semantic types of the magical words essential to the performance of the rite of the treatment of the Evil Eye. One semantic type derives from Christian religion. It evokes the help of God and the saints against the threat of the domination of the Evil. The priests themselves often provide village women with appropriate formulae that they can use in the rite for the treatment of the Evil Eye.

As my data will show shortly, the village religion and folk magic come together on more than one occasion over the belief in the malevolent magic power of the Evil Eye. This affiliation of the Christian religion and folk magic is most interesting. It brings out another dimension in the relation between the spheres of religion and magic, often considered separate. It shows that there are no distinct, clear-cut boundaries between the two; rather, they merge into each other on many occasions.

The second semantic type of the magical words employed in the rite of the Evil Eye consists of an interplay of words with a sexual connotation. This very reference to sex is what is believed to give the recital its magical potency. Here we come across the tradition of fertility magic of agricultural societies.

I will give examples of both semantic types of formulae employed in the rite of the Evil Eye. First I quote one which derives from the Christian religion.

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

St. Anargiri, miracle-worker, you received a donation,  
give a donation.

The Evil came without causing harm, let it go without harm.

Christ has been resurrected, the evil has been dispersed.

Two eyes affected you, three have cured you: the Father,  
the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Στο ονομα του Πατρος και του Υιου και του Αγλου Πνευματος, Αμην.

Αγλου Αναργυρου και θαυματουργου, δωρεα ελαβατε, δωρεα δωσατε.

Ανετριχα ηρθε το κακο, ανετριχα να φυγει.

Ο Χριστος ανεστηθηκε, το κακο σκορπιστηκε.

Δυο ματια σε ματιασανε, τρια σε ξεματιασανε Το Πατρι, το  
Υιο, και το Αγλο Πνευμα.

A formula against the Evil Eye with semantics of sexual connotation  
is the following:

Garlic, the cock of Meme  
and the dick of Mouhamet,  
and from toe to head  
and make it go into your ass.

(Note: 'Meme' and 'Mouhamet' are Turkish (Islamic) names.)

Σκορδα, πουτσα του Μεμε  
και η φωλη του Μουχαμετ,  
κι απ τα νυχια ως την κορφη  
και στον κωλο να σου μπει.

As I have mentioned, yet another way to cure a person affected by the Evil Eye is by recourse to the priest. He is summoned to read extracts from the Holy Book with reference to the power of Evil and then to Christ's power over the Devil and all evil spirits. These extracts read to dispel the Evil Eye are called 'bewitching' (βασκανειες). The priest may also write on a piece of paper such relevant extracts, which are then placed near the victim.

But before proceeding to evaluate the priest's role with the domain of magic against the Evil Eye, I should outline the exact circumstances that demand the intervention of the representative of the church.

First, my data show that the priest is usually summoned at a later stage of a victim's treatment from the Evil Eye, when it seems to be a severe attack (i.e., when the victim is severely ill due to such malevolent forces). After the Evil Eye has been countered in a rite by a female specialist or by detecting the person responsible for 'giving the eye', the priest may be asked to come along, bless the victim and write an extract from the Bible against evil - the written extract then being placed near the victim during the recovery from illness.

A second point is that the priest is often asked by women to provide them with extracts from the Holy Book 'against the forces of evil and Christ's triumph over them', as they say.

A third point is that the priest's help in curing the Evil Eye was mentioned to me quite frequently in connection with domestic animals affected by the Evil Eye. Especially in earlier times when the village was very poor and people relied a great deal on their few domestic animals, they would ask the priest to read extracts from the Bible when an animal had some disease that its owner attributed to the Evil Eye. I have no account of a female specialist summoned in the case of a sick animal.

Finally, my data reveal that the priest was called to 'read' against the Evil Eye in very few cases. I recorded a total of forty-eight cases of the treatment of the Evil Eye, and in only five of them does the priest figure. Even more significantly, in three of these five cases, the priest failed and other means of treatment had to be sought. Actually, in all these three cases, the power of the Evil Eye was counteracted by finally finding out and summoning the person responsible for having caused the Evil Eye. After the person responsible had spat on the victim and had said the magic formula 'not to be bewitched', the sick person immediately revived. At that point the priest's help was summoned again: he either read or wrote an extract from the Bible against the forces of evil, and the extract was placed near the sick person to help his/her recovery.

It seems obvious to me from my data that there is a distinct ranking of the different means of counteracting the Evil Eye according to the effectiveness attributed to each. Tracing and summoning the person responsible for casting the Eye is the most highly ranked method. The villagers believe that if that person spits on his/her victim and utters the appropriate formula, the victim will definitely recover (when the damage caused is not permanent - a point that I have stressed earlier on). Apparently, this method is believed never to fail.

But very often it is difficult to trace the person responsible. In such circumstances, the best alternative is to summon a female specialist to perform the rite of 'undoing of the Evil Eye'. This method is considered highly reliable and effective, though there are cases where it may fail.

A third method is the summoning of the priest, which, as my data show, is the least reliable of the three. Rather, the summoning of the priest is more valuable at a later stage of the curing process, as an additional safeguard to promote the victim's recovery and to keep away further attacks of the evil forces.

We see here that folk magic enlists the support of the Church in the fight against evil residing in witchcraft and sorcery. The Orthodox Church accepts the folk belief in the Evil Eye all over Greece. There are many occasions when the Church acknowledges and embraces realms of magic beliefs and practices, and the Evil Eye presents the most evident instance. The realm of magic in Greek agricultural communities is most prominent and the Church (in its struggle for political power which I have discussed in Chapter Four) chose to embrace rather than fight it. Both the domain of magic and the Church benefit from their alliance against the Evil Eye. The Church is reinforced by the support of the people, while the validity and viability of magic is reconfirmed.

I conclude this discussion on the Evil Eye by presenting a most characteristic story, which more or less sums up the most salient points on the subject, and especially the role of the church representative.

One day, a woman visited a house where there lived a strong, healthy and beautiful eleven-month-old boy. As was only natural, she admired and praised the little boy (αχου, να σε χαρω). Right after her departure, the child was suddenly taken ill. The priest was summoned to read extracts from the Bible against the Evil Eye which was immediately detected as the cause of the little boy's sudden illness. But the priest's 'reading' did not help the child at all. The family's second step was to call the local doctor, who professed himself unable to

understand the cause of the boy's illness. Meanwhile, the child was getting worse and worse. His maternal grandmother, convinced that he had been affected by the Evil Eye, sent for one of the female specialists who performed the rite of the 'undoing the Evil Eye', but still without success. The specialist only confirmed the family's belief that the child was suffering from the Evil Eye. Relatives, friends and neighbours who crowded into the house as soon as they heard of the bad news, were asked to spit on the boy in case it was one of them who had bewitched him. Finally, the despairing mother thought of the women who had visited them earlier on that day and had admired her son. They immediately summoned her. As soon as she spat on the boy and uttered the appropriate magic formula against the Evil Eye, the child revived. As a last step, in precaution, the grandmother asked the priest to read and write a note from an extract from the Bible against the Evil Eye and the forces of evil, and the note was placed under the child's pillow for a few days until he had fully recovered his health.

As my informants told me, even the doctor who witnessed that event was forced at the end to accept the existence of the malevolent power of the Evil Eye.

In a case where the person who has cast the Evil Eye cannot be summoned to spit on the victim and undo the attack, a piece of his wooden house entrance door can be extracted. It is then placed in the household holy oil-lamp together with Holy Myron. The oil-lamp is placed by the victim and left burning until he recovers. The piece of the front door of the caster of the Eye is a substitute for that person, because, as the villagers say, 'He goes, he comes, he crosses the threshold' (Βγαίνει, μπαίνει, δραπελαει το κατωφλι).

f) Rites of Passage

The Great Tradition provides church ceremonies for the three major rites of passage in Greek society: the ceremonies of baptism, wedding and funeral. However, the folk tradition has also intruded into this realm with magical rites, magical precautions and magical beliefs. These three major steps in the life-cycle (i.e., the entrance of a new member into the society by birth, marriage alliance, and the exit of a member from the society by death) are marked by means of folk practices, independently of the sphere of the Great Tradition.

Childbirth is a major focus of concern within the domestic domain. In this small community, cut off from the rest of the world and from scientific knowledge, the survival of new-born children, until as late as the 1960s, was a matter of chance, and the rate of death for young children quite high - 30 per cent. Hence, a number of magical beliefs and magico-medical practices were performed by women in childbirth, as the only resource these people possessed in facing natural hazard in the lack of scientific medical knowledge. In addition, childbirth is surrounded by magical rites that are rites of passage and mark the social emphasis placed in this point of the life-cycle.

These magical beliefs and practices are to strengthen and protect mother and child from evil, mark out their transitory state, ideologically emphasise the importance and value of women's reproductive role in perpetuating and enhancing the family, the kin group and community at large. The magical beliefs and practices surrounding pregnancy and childbirth exist to help the new mother and child pass smoothly and unharmed through this transitory phase of their lives. On the one hand, there is protective magic concerning pregnancy,



birth, and the transition stage after birth. And on the other hand, there are rites pertaining to the transition state of mother and baby and the integration of the child into the community.

During pregnancy, women receive special treatment where it concerns food. The pregnant woman is urged to eat certain foods that are regarded as highly nutritive for her state. Whenever the pregnant woman enters a house where some delicacy has just been cooked or she passes by a house where they are frying fish, she will immediately be offered some, for she is sure to desire it strongly since 'it smells to her', as the villagers say. This is a special treatment addressed to both mother and child based on the local notion that 'The baby in the womb opens the mouth when sensing the smell of food', and therefore failing to offer savoury food to the mother may harm both her and the baby. All these serve to mark the pregnant woman apart, show she goes through a special transitory state, and at the same time magically strengthen her and protect her during that state.

Pregnant women are already in a transition period, and therefore must not participate in other rites of passage. They cannot act as wedding sponsors or godparents. They should not attend funerals and must avoid the sight of the dead, a funeral procession and the cherubim icons, or the baby in their womb - they say - will faint.

A pregnant woman must not sit on a threshold, or the baby will be born with a soft spot on the head (καρούλα). If she has a fright, hurts herself, falls down or has a sorrow, her mother rubs ouzo on her stomach, believing that its strong odour will revive the baby in her womb (για να ξεσπλεται).

The day of the celebration of St. Simeon (Αγ. Σιμεων) is a conspicuous day for pregnant women. By an association of related ideas (the name Simeon in Greek has a very similar sound to the word 'sign'), it is believed that if a pregnant woman touches or handles things that can leave a mark (e.g., oil, very hot utensils, paint, etc.), her baby will be born with an identical mark on the same part of the body. For instance, one woman when pregnant had wiped her oily palm on her skirt, and when her child was born it bore a dark mark on that same spot of the body. We encounter here once again a belief in homeopathic magic, through which the Fourni women account for the inexplicable phenomenon of birthmarks. In the evening of St. Simeon's day, pregnant women must cross themselves, and pronounce the preventive magical formula, 'I throw behind me what I have touched'.

Until ten to fifteen years ago, women did not leave the island to go to a hospital to give birth. When labour started, the local midwife was called to help the woman give birth in her own house, while several of her kinswomen (especially her mother and sisters) gathered to offer emotional support. The midwife was not only the magico-medical specialist for giving birth, she was also the magical specialist who performed the rites acknowledging a child's arrival in the community.

Right after birth the midwife would take the umbilical cord and placenta and bury them in a field. The part of the umbilical cord that falls off the baby at around the tenth day after birth is kept by the mother in some place in the house, perhaps in a drawer. Keeping the child's cord is supposed to have the magical effect of tying the child to the family. For people who cut off their ties with their family, the villagers often say, 'Who knows where your umbilical cord has been thrown away' (Ποιος ξερει πουναλ πεταμενο τ' αφαλι σου!).

The midwife would proceed with a second rite, aimed at appeasing the spirits and securing their good will. She bathed the child in a basket with water to which she added bread, salt and sugar. The bread was to make the child 'strong', the salt was to make it 'charming',<sup>1</sup> and the sugar was to make it 'sweet'. We notice here that the metaphors employed derive from the women's world, the domestic world, and here specifically from cooking. Then the midwife would tie a scarf around the baby's head, placing some gold coin or jewel between the scarf and the head (the gold piece usually belongs to the mother or the maternal grandmother) to make the child prosperous in life.

The third rite of passage of the new-born child was performed, again by the midwife, on the third day after birth. This rite involved again bathing the baby, but this time it is a purification rite. Kinsfolk, neighbours and friends of both sexes gathered in the mother's house. The midwife bathed the baby in front of the spectators, and they would throw money into the water (this money is used to pay for the midwife's ritual services). Finally, the midwife dressed the baby in new clothes. The new mother's close kinswomen (usually her mother and sisters) offered the visitors sweets and a milky drink made of almonds, bread and mastich (δάστυαλο) with which the visitors wished well to mother and child.

After the visitors had gone, the maternal grandmother or the midwife would place three dishes with special sweets near the child's cradle. This ceremonial food is offered to the three Fates who are supposed to visit the child that night to give good luck as their gift.

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1. The Greek word νοστιμο means 'savory', but also carries the significance 'charming' when used for a person.

The maternal grandmother still has a paramount role in employing the magical practices that aim to keep this transition phase safe and smooth for mother and child. The transition phase lasts forty days, and involves a certain amount of seclusion and the observation of magical prescriptions and precautions.

The new-born baby was placed in a wooden cradle next to its mother and the midwife put various charms under the child's pillow for protection from evil forces: a holy book, a piece of ceremonial bread (bread they give as an offering to the church in various rituals), or a piece of ordinary bread (bread is regarded as the 'embodiment of Christ', and thus it is also a symbol of strength), a seal used to stamp ceremonial bread (offered by the maternal grandmother; every household has its own seal), a small cross made by the mother from cane, an 'eye', which is a blue glass bead and has the power to counteract the Evil Eye (offered by the maternal grandmother and put on the baby's clothes on the third day after birth by the mother), and a piece of fishing-net sewn by certain women who are specialists in it, and pinned to the inner part of the child's underclothes. Also, the maternal grandmother often prepared a special amulet from Holy Myron, earth brought from the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and a small wooden cross. That amulet was pinned by her on the inside of the child's clothes.

When a child is born with a thin layer of skin covering the face, it is a good omen and it will bring the child good luck. However, the midwife must be careful not to tear it off the wrong way or the child may be half-blinded. The mother washes that piece of skin in a stream and gives it to the child's father to wear as an amulet.

The kinsmen and visitors who come to see the mother and new-born child and wish them well, must spit three times on the child and wish it 'not to be bewitched' (να μην βασκαθει) and 'not to be caught by the Evil Eye' (να μην ματιαστει).

New-born babies are swaddled in a rectangular piece of white cotton cloth (φασκιες) in a manner that holds their arms outstretched and clasped to their sides and the feet stretched out (while young babies always tend to bend their legs up in the same position they had in the womb). Only the head is left out. Babies are kept swaddled in this way for forty days, i.e., up to their visit to the church for the purification rite by which the period of their transitory state comes to an end.

What is interesting in the swaddling of young babies is the striking similarity between the manner the villagers swaddle babies and the manner in which they wind the dead. The deceased are wound in a similar rectangular white cotton cloth (σαβανο) which holds their feet outstretched, though the hands are left out to be crossed over the chest.

I think that this similarity is not coincidental. The very same symbolism (i.e., wrapping up in a white piece of cloth) is employed in both cases; to indicate the passage in and out of life. Each individual should enter and leave this world in the same way. The white piece of cloth is a ritual cloth that marks their state of transition into and out of life.

A woman who has just given birth is in a liminal state, designated by the word 'lehona' (λεχονα) applied to her. This state of the 'lehona' can harm others, but is a state in which the mother and child are highly vulnerable to evil influences. The 'lehona' is in a highly

polluted and polluting state, and at the same time, being a lactating mother, she is highly endangered by evil influences, the Evil Eye and external pollution.

The first nine days of this stage are especially dangerous, and the 'lehona' must stay in bed. During this first period, mother and child are especially vulnerable to external evil influences; there is the danger of catching a cold, the danger of the Evil Eye, the danger from hearing a blasphemy or the mention of the Devil, the danger of pollution from a woman who has had sexual intercourse or a woman menstruating (in which case the child may get red spots on the face or the lactating mother's milk may stop), and the danger involved in hearing about illness, misfortune and death.

The maternal grandmother sprays all visitors with Holy Water (brought from the church) on their way in. The visitors must spit three times on the child to safeguard against 'affecting the baby with the Evil Eye', and for the same reason should not praise the mother or child in any way. Any mention of the baby's good health, weight and beauty is a potential threat of the Evil Eye, even when the comment comes from the mother herself.

A further precaution for the mother and child dictates that after sunset their house door should neither open nor close, since it is during the hours of darkness that evil forces acquire even greater malevolent power. That means that no visitors are allowed in after sunset and the husband and older children ought to be home before dark. The only person who can go in or out is the maternal grandmother. If the husband happens to be coming home from a sea strip after dark, he ought to leave his right shoe outside the entrance, so as not to bring any evil forces into the house.

After the forty days transition state, the mother and the child visit the church for a purification rite that belongs to the realm of the Great Tradition. This rite is a re-enactment of the Biblical visit of the Virgin Mary and Christ to the synagogue forty days after His birth. At the end of this rite, the mother takes Holy Communion, which epitomizes the end of transition stage. Thereafter mother (and child) are integrated into the community, and are allowed free movement and interaction with the rest of the people.

At some point during the first year of the life of a child, the church performs a further and final rite of passage for the child's integration into the community. This is the rite of baptism by which the child acquires the name of a grandparent (or of another relative when he already has four siblings named after the grandparents).

If, however, a baby is suddenly taken severely ill before having been baptized, a naming rite is immediately performed at home. In this case it is not necessary to call the priest. Any woman present who knows the ritual words can perform the naming ceremony. Instead of dipping the child in water, as in the church baptism, the child is thrown upwards three times. The names given on such occasions are preferably that of the Virgin Mary (i.e., Mary) for girls, and the name of Christ (Emanuel - Μανωλης) for boys. If the child does not die, it is rebaptized with a proper church ceremony.

After baptism, the child must be taken to church on three successive Sundays to take Holy Communion, hence epitomizing its new full status as a named community member. The child's baptismal clothes (stained with Holy Oil during the performance) are taken by the mother or maternal grandmother to be washed in sea-water: being ritual clothes, they must be ritually cleansed.

In summary, we see that until recently (when women started giving birth in hospitals and the traditional role of midwife became obsolete), the first rites of passage acknowledging a child's arrival were performed by a female specialist, the midwife. The midwife was not only the magico-medical specialist at birth, but also a ritual specialist. She performed the first rite for the integration of the child into society (the burial of the umbilical cord), a rite requesting the favourable disposition of the spirits (the bath in bread, salt and sugar and the placing of a golden item on the baby's head), and a purification rite (the ceremonious bath of the baby in public). At the same time, we see that maternal grandmothers also have a major role in the realm of magic during the transition stage following birth. The maternal grandmother takes care of the charms and amulets that protect the new-born child from evil forces, ensures the swaddling of the baby in the special cloth that marks out its transition state, and is responsible for magical precautions against pollution (a magical practice of purification: sprinkling the visitors with Holy Water during the transition period). Finally, we see that in case of sudden illness, the naming rite can be performed within the domestic domain by a woman.

Two significant points arise out of these data. The first point concerns the prominence of magical rites and practices in the Fourni society. Although the Great Tradition provides a variety of rites of passage upon the arrival of a new community member (purification of the house by the priest the day after birth; purification of mother and child in the church after the forty days of transition, and full integration of the child into the community baptism), there is a parallel set of practices and rites within the realm of magic. And although the



midwife's role has been eclipsed in our days, the magical practices of the maternal grandmother retain all their vigour. This prominence of magic and folk rites of passage upon birth, points, I think, once again to the implication that the Great Tradition is not allotted a leading position within Fourni society.

The second point arising out of the data concerns the exclusive role of women in childbirth magic. The magico-medical and ritual specialist in this major social sphere (procreation and the reproduction of the community through it) is a female, the midwife. The presence and participation of kinswomen (especially the maternal grandmother) in the magical practices and rites during the mother and child's transitory phase contrasts with the total absence of men from these events, vital for the community. Childbirth magic has its locus in the domestic domain and is a primary female activity.

Weddings are a major social and ritual event, marking a most socially pronounced life-transition in this community, and hence are highly elaborate, involving numerous preparations and rituals during almost a week before the actual church ceremony. A number of the preparations and rituals for the wedding clearly belong to the realm of magical beliefs and practices. The various stages in the preparations for the actual wedding day also involve a great variety of symbolic acts, gestures, words and objects. The marriage rite of passage and transition stage are defined by elements of fertility and purification rites, seclusion from community life, exclusion from ritual life, and re-birth.

In this section I have made a selection of some of the major magical instances and symbols related to marriage ceremonies. I will describe

the fertility ceremony of 'laying the bed'; the belief in contagious magic according to which certain practices can increase the marriage prospects for the bride and groom's friends; the protective magic that concerns betrothals; the belief concerning the 'binding' of the groom; the transitory stage of the newly-weds after the wedding ceremony; and, finally, the significance of the symbols of rice and 'koufeta'.

On the afternoon of the day before the wedding, relatives and friends are invited to the future bride's house for a fertility ceremony, which is called the 'laying of the bed'. From earlier on that day, the bride's unmarried girl-friends gather and lay the bed. At the appointed time, the relatives and friends invited arrive and are offered drinks and sweets. Then the bride's girl-friends (weddings are the sole occasion where age groups have a marked presence) stand around the bed and sing the 'bride's songs'. These are songs praising the beauty of the bride and groom, wishing them a happy marriage, good luck, prosperity and fertility.

I will quote here a few from the rich repertory of the bride's songs as an illustration.

Lay the silk bed covers	Στρωσε τε τα μεταξωτα
Lay the velvet bed covers	Στρωσε τε τα βελουδα
For the bride and the groom to lie down	Να πεισει η νυφη κι ο γαμπρος
The virgin girl, the young girl.	Η κορη, η κοπελουδα.
My groom, where you stand	Γαμπρε μ', εδω που καθεσαι
There cannot stand carnations	Γαρυφαλλια δεν πρεπει
You are the carnation	Εσυ εισαι το γαρυφαλλο
And those who have eyes can see it.	Κι αυ εχει ματια βλεπει.

How beautiful our bride looks	Εμορφη πουναι η νυφη μας
Like a silver tray	Σαν ασημενιο δισκο
I am standing and watching her	Στεκω και την παρατηρω
I cannot find in her any fault.	Ψεγαδω δεν της βρισκω
Little pigeons and birds	Χελιδονακια και πουλια
My bride, in your rooms	Νυφη μ', στα δωματα σου
I wish you good luck	Να ειναι καλοριζικα
On your wedding crowns.	Τα στεφανωματα σου.

During the singing, the guests throw paper money and gold coins on the bed. The mother of the groom and the mother of the bride in particular throw on the bed gold coins of great value and in excess of those thrown by the other guests. The money and gold coins, apart from their actual use to the new couple, symbolize prosperity in their new life as husband and wife.

After the singing, a baby or a young child (preferably a boy) is rolled on the bed. This is to ensure fertility for the conjugal pair and the wish that their first-born be a boy. Then the guests are offered more drinks and sweets, they dance, and finally depart.

In weddings we also find several magical practices that are believed to increase the marriage chances of the groom and bride's unmarried friends (here again we come upon the pronounced presence of age groups in the celebration of weddings).

On the actual day of the wedding, the bride's closest unmarried girl-friend helps her take her bath and put on her wedding dress. That girl keeps the bride's old underwear for herself. It is the practice of contagious magic: the bride's underwear can bring the same piece of

luck (since marriage, and especially an early marriage, is considered good luck) and the girl will soon marry.

After the bride has put on her wedding dress, her unmarried girl-friends will come and help her with her hairdo, make-up and painting her nails. Before she puts on her bridal shoes, the girls write their names with a pen on the soles. Those whose names have faded away after the evening dance that follows the wedding, are sure to get married or at least receive a proposal. Any name that still shows on the shoe soles the next morning means that that particular girl will remain single for some time. The same practice is followed by the groom's male friends who write their names on the soles of his shoes.

After the church wedding ritual, the priest gives handful of 'koufeta' (sugar-covered almonds) to the single attendants. Young boys and girls alike put the 'koufeta' under their pillows that night. That will make them see in their dreams their future wife or husband.

During the wedding evening, a fiesta is held in one of the coffeehouses for all the guests. Just before dawn, the relatives and close friends of the newly-wed couple will take the bride and groom to the old village spring, singing the nuptial songs (the bride's songs, they call them), accompanied by the local musicians.

At the water spring, a short purification rite is held to epitomize the re-birth of the newly-weds in their new life of married adulthood. The rite consists of the offering of spring water to bride and groom to drink. Then the young unmarried relatives and friends rush to drink water too. The first one to drink water after the newly-weds will be sure to marry within the year.

This worry over marrying soon is indeed a characteristic feature of the Fourni villager. Weddings, as I have said, are a most important life-cycle transition, by which adulthood and full participation in all aspects of community life are achieved. As the villagers say, 'Marriage is man's destiny' (ο προορισμος τ' ανθρωπου). Spinsterhood is regarded as a true calamity, and the fact that the village does include a few spinsters, makes people even more obsessed with the idea of marrying off their daughters as quickly as possible.

Another factor that adds to this worry is the precariousness of the institution of betrothal. Engagements are frequently broken for a variety of reasons, quite often just because either the girl or the boy shifts their attention to another partner. A girl who goes through love affairs or engagements for a long time jeopardises her chances for marriage, and may finally find herself in the humiliating position of not being regarded as a desirable candidate any more. Similarly, young men who go through many engagements and love affairs are not well looked upon as prospective husbands. They are suspected of infidelity in marriage.

Accordingly, magical precautions are minutely obeyed in the effort to ensure that an engagement soon leads to marriage. All visitors to the parental house of the fiancé, and even more especially to the house of the fiancée, must be careful to leave by the same door they entered, so that 'the groom does not go away', or that 'the arrangement is not upset' (να μην χαλασει το συνουμειο). For the same reason, people are careful not to sit down on the threshold of a house in which one of the children is betrothed.

When the groom has broken another engagement to marry his bride, or when he has been highly desired by another family, or when some other girl happens to be greatly in love with him, he may fall victim to the magical 'binding' (δεσμο). During the church ceremony, any one of the people who has a grudge against him for having chosen his particular bride instead of another girl, may tie a knot in a handkerchief. The 'binding' of the groom affects his sexual potency, and prevents him from consummating the marriage. He may be unable to perform not only on the wedding night, but often for as long as a whole month.

The magic of the 'binding' can be broken by the bride's mother or another of her maternal kinswomen. I could not elicit any information as to the exact way in which these females could free the groom from the 'binding', and it may be that such knowledge is kept secret. However, I think that most probably there has not actually been any actual case (at least lately) of freeing a groom from a 'binding', and the statement that the bride's kinswomen can resolve this kind of magic is not based on facts, but is rather an ideological edifice that counterposes the power of the maternal kinswomen against any harm that may be directed to their sons-in-law: the statement stresses the importance of the matrifocal structure and points out the fact that the groom now belongs irrevocably to his bride, and her maternal female relatives are there to make sure of it.

Actually, measures are taken in advance to safeguard the groom's sexual potency. A small pair of scissors and a piece of fishing net and an amulet are put by the groom's mother in the breast pocket of his wedding coat. Similarly, the bride's mother places a pair of scissors under his pillow in the nuptial bed to ensure a successfully consummated wedding night.

We have here a magical practice with two symbolic levels. On the one level, this magical practice concerns fertility (ensuring male sexual potency). On the second level, the belief that the bride's maternal kinswomen possess the magic knowledge that can free the groom from the binding symbolically emphasises the integration of the groom into the bride's matrifocal group after the wedding.

With the wedding rite, the newly-weds pass into a stage of re-birth: they are re-born in the new state of married adulthood. This lasts for a short transitional period which is marked by seclusion. For eight days after the wedding, the bride should not come out of the bridal house. Similarly, the groom should stay in for three days. This seclusion is seen by the villagers as a measure of protection from jealousy and the Evil Eye. During this transition stage of eight days, the bride must not engage in cooking. Her mother sends in meals especially prepared for the newly-weds, 'nourishing meals', as they say, because the new couple is supposed to be exhausted from sexual exercise.

On the first Sunday after the wedding, the newly-weds must visit the church and take Holy Communion. In this way their passage into a new state in social life is epitomized.

We have seen that taking Holy Communion also epitomizes the end of the forty days transition period of mother and new-born child, as well as the naming rite of passage of a child.

Thereafter, the newly-weds are reintegrated into everyday community life, but brides are still excluded from ritual life. For a period of one year brides must not attend or participate in any rites of passage. They must also avoid things involved in rites of passage, such as the sight of a funeral procession, or a dead body, wearing mourning clothes,

funeral or memorial ritual food, a wedding procession. In olden times, it was frequent to perform two weddings on the same day. If the two wedding processions met on the way to the spring (for the purification rite I have described), the brides ought either to kiss each other or display open hostility (which they do by raising the hand and pointing the palm with the fingers spread apart - να μουτζωθουν).

Rice and 'koufeta' (sugar-covered almonds) are the two symbolic objects most widely used in connection with weddings. Rice symbolizes prosperity, stability and happiness in marriage, but most of all it is said to symbolize fertility. After washing, ironing, displaying, and finally storing the bride's trousseau in the new bridal house in the week preceding the wedding, the women helping in these preparations throw handfuls of rice on the linen and clothes. That rice is never cleared away, and is to be found among the unused linen many years later. Similarly, the groom's smaller trousseau and clothes, when packed to be taken to the bridal house, are sprayed with handfuls of rice.

At the ceremony of 'laying the bed', after singing the bride's songs, the guests throw rice on the nuptial bed at the same time as they throw money. On the actual wedding day, while the groom and bride's friends of the same age group and sex help them put on their wedding clothes (each in their respective parental house), they throw rice on them.

At the church ceremony, at the moment the priest, the bride, the groom and the best man/best woman perform the 'Isaiah dance' - ο χορος του Ισαα' - which is part of the church ritual, the congregation throws lavish quantities of rice on them. Two large baskets filled with rice and flower-buds are brought to the church for that very purpose, although the guests also bring along small paper bags with rice to use in addition.



Often, more handfuls of rice will be thrown at the groom and the bride while they dance in the ensuing fiesta in a coffeehouse.

Weddings are a major rite of passage in the Fourni community. They mark out a life transition of paramount social importance, since family and kinship form the basis of the social organization. As such, they are the most joyful celebration in village life, and not only for the two families involved, but for the community as a whole.

The best way to describe the local perception of marriage would be to say that weddings are essentially viewed as a blessing. The blessing involves not only the in-marrying families, but is extended in a lesser way to the people attending the ceremony as well. The 'koufeta' is the symbolic medium by which the blessing is extended to them. The villagers say that to take the sugar-covered almonds 'is good', which in their idiom does not simply mean good from the practical and social point of view. When they say that something is 'good', they want to denote that doing it brings some kind of magico-religious well-being and good luck.

The guests at a wedding rush to the priest after the wedding ritual to kiss the Holy Book and pick up a handful of 'koufeta' from the table standing in front of him. As they leave the church, they all make sure they are given at least one 'boubouniera' (μπουμπουνιέρα) - a kind of party favour which is distributed at weddings by the bride's relatives and consists of 'koufeta' wrapped up in a piece of tulle. Usually, the guests want to take one 'boubouniera' for each member of their family, so that the blessing will involve them all. There is often a lot of fuss over the 'boubouniera' running short and people demanding more than one each. Going to a wedding and not bringing back home at

least one is a shameful occurrence over which the villagers tend to feel hurt and insulted in the same way as if they were not invited to the wedding at all. It makes them feel as if they have missed out on the blessing associated with the joyful event of a wedding.

In summary, we have a rich field of magical notions and practices surrounding the rite of passage into marriage. Here again, we note that the major participant actors are female: women lay the bed and young girls sing the bridal songs in the fertility ceremony of 'laying the bed', women practise the fertility magic to prevent the 'binding of the groom', and women are said to possess the necessary magical knowledge to free him from such witchcraft. Again, men are missing from this area of magic. This fact acquires special significance when we consider that it concerns the transition into married status, an affair not confined within the domestic domain, but of paramount social importance for the community as it consists of the passage into adulthood and aims at the creation of a new family.

Burial ceremonies are the third major rite of passage for the Fourni community. The funeral is a church service, i.e., it belongs to the Great Tradition realm. A church procession (the priest, the boys carrying the cherubim icons, the man carrying the censer) accompanies the coffin with the body from its house to the church for the funeral ceremony, then to the cemetery for the burial rite, and finally the procession returns to the deceased's house for a purification rite before returning to church.

However, there is a large body of magical practices and rites that are performed at the same time on the occasion of death. Female specialists prepare the body for its exit from society, and there are

various purification practices concerning the deceased and also the people who come in contact with him/her.

Immediately after death, two female specialists (there are several middle-aged women who specialize in the preparation of the body) are called in. They strip the body and wash it with either vinegar or white spirit. They insert a piece of cloth or cotton wool in the anus. Then, they wind the body in the ritual rectangular white piece of cloth, the shroud (σαβανο). As I have mentioned, the shroud is similar to the cloth in which new-born babies are swaddled. The way this cloth is wrapped is identical in both cases: arms and legs are stretched out along the body, and then the whole body is rolled in the shroud. Then, they tie a white ribbon around the face (like a caricature of people suffering from toothache) so as to keep the mouth closed. After wrapping the body in the shroud, the female specialists dress it up in his/her best clothes, then they carry the body to the floor of the main room of the house (the sitting-room or kitchen), and cover it with a white sheet.

A big candle is placed behind the head of the deceased. The candle must be kept alight, or replaced by new candles, until the body leaves the house for the funeral ceremony. Kin, friends and neighbours mount an all-night vigil (again, it seems, a vigil to watch over the body so that the soul does not leave). The close family, as the most distressed, are sent to bed. The vigilants chat, tell stories and joke through the night, while a few fall asleep.

At the death of unmarried adults, the body is dressed in wedding clothes, and 'koufeta' (sugar-covered almonds), which are a wedding symbol, are distributed at the funeral. Apparently, this is a symbolic

enactment of the marriage rite of passage which must precede the death rite of passage. It is exactly the same as the hasty naming rite performed within the household when an unbaptized child is ill and feared likely to die. Individuals who have already been integrated into the community must not leave it without having undergone those rites of passage that determine their social status as members of that community.

After the burial ceremony, female friends and distant kinswomen distribute ceremonial food (bread rolls and cheese) to all members of the funeral procession, at the exit of the cemetery. This ceremonial food is distributed by the deceased's kin for the alleviation of his/her soul from sins on its way into the other world. The ceremonial food is called 'forgiveness' (συγχωρο) which signifies its symbolic function. People receive the food and wish, 'May God forgive him' (θεος συγχωρεσ' τον). They must consume the ceremonial food immediately and not take it to their houses, which is considered to bring bad luck.

Then, the family and friends visit the deceased's house. This is a ceremonial visit: the villagers present at the vigil left the house accompanying the deceased and must return to the house after the burial to be cleansed of the pollution caused by the proximity with death. As the villagers say, 'They have to go to shake off the bad luck of death, leave it in the house of the deceased and not carry it to their own houses'. The priest performs a brief purification rite at the house, and then brandy, coffee and biscuits are served. The visitors pronounce wishes once again. They wish, 'May God forgive him' for the deceased, and 'Life for you' (Ζωη σ' ελογου σας) for his relatives.

Death is believed to be both polluting and contagious. Magical precautions and purification practices are essential to avoid pollution and contagion. The people who happen to be present at the actual moment of death, must, on their return home, take off their clothes, take a bath and rub their bodies with white spirit. As they say, at the time of death everyone present 'is dipped in the blood of the deceased' (λουζεται βουτιζεται στο αιμα του νεκρου). And since death is viewed as polluting and contagious, they need to be cleansed. Again, when a funeral process goes through the village streets, all doors and windows are shut to keep death out of the house ('to keep the bad luck out', as the villagers say). During the night vigil over the dead body, people need to be specially careful not to handle things over the deceased. As they say, 'He will take me with him if I cross over him' (θα με παρει κι εμενα, αμα τον ξεπερασω).

Finally, the house of the deceased is polluted by his/her death. Immediately after the coffin is taken out of the house for the funeral, a glass or cup is broken on the entrance door. Again, the villagers say this practice aims to chase away the bad luck (i.e., the pollution and contagion attributed to death) from the household of the deceased.

Fourni society is also greatly concerned with the soul of the dead: its transition state until it leaves the world irrevocably (forty days after the actual death), mourning and commemoration for a period of three years (when the grave is opened and the bones are removed to a small chamber in the cemetery).

The villagers say that at the time of dying 'the soul is fighting' (ψυχομαχαι). When the dying person has 'a good soul', death is easy and painless, but when he has 'a bad soul', death is slow and agonising.

At the burial, the ribbon around the face that holds the mouth shut is untied, so that the soul is freed to leave the body through the mouth.

The soul of the deceased on its way to the other world is burdened with messages from women for previously deceased kin. These messages are in the nature of greetings. Occasionally, a woman puts a flower in the coffin to be handed over to a dead husband or child.

The soul of the deceased is believed to stay 'between this world and the other world', as the villagers put it, for forty days. We notice that the transition period at death is of the same time length as the transition period at the arrival of a baby. During that period, the soul visits various places where the deceased spent his life. The soul in this liminal state is believed to have earthly needs. An oil-lamp and a glass of water are kept by the deceased's bed for three days after burial, because 'he may be thirsty'. Every evening during the forty days' transition period, the closest kinswomen (wife, mother, daughter) light the oil-lamp by the grave so that he is not left in darkness at night.

We notice the belief that the soul of the dead has needs on yet another occasion. After Easter, there is a commemoration rite for the deceased villagers at the church on the three following Saturdays. Women bring one dish of the 'koliva', ceremonial food for every recently deceased relative. This is an offering to the dead, 'a greeting', as the villagers call it, and a sign of remembrance. The soul comes down to earth and picks up three bits of rice from the ceremonial food. The souls that have not been offered ceremonial food on this occasion are said to cry because their kin have forgotten them.

Mourning is strictly prescribed as a sign of distress over the loss of a beloved relative and a payment of homage - a sign to be noticed by the villagers as well as by the soul of the deceased. Mourning is a female responsibility. Close kinsmen may (or may not) wear a black ribbon around their left arm as a sign of mourning for a couple of days. But kinswomen always dress in black - to an extent for a period which reflect their kinship relationship to the deceased: wives dress all in black (and also put a black scarf around the head) for life; mothers dress the same for three years; daughters wear black for three years, but the black scarf only for one year; sisters dress in black for one or two years and wear the scarf for six months; daughters-in-law wear black for almost one year; sisters-in-law for three to six months; grand-daughters for three months; cousins of first degree wear brown clothes and a brown scarf for forty days; affinal kinswomen wear dark-coloured clothes for forty days. The black scarf and the black tights (worn even in summer) denote the depth of mourning.

Special emphasis is also placed on the commemoration of the dead. Female specialists prepare the 'soul loaves' (ψυχοψωμα) and the 'koliva' ritual food at the deceased's house. The kinswomen distribute the 'soul loaves' to village households, and take the 'koliva' to the church for a rite by the priest and then distribute them to the village households. The same commemoration practices are held on the third, sixth and ninth, thirtieth and fortieth days, the third and sixth months, and on the first, second and third years after the burial. On the deceased's name day, in the first year after his death, his kinswomen prepare and distribute sweet bread or biscuits in commemoration. On the third Saturday of the carnival celebration (the so-called Soul Saturday - (ψυχοσαββατο), a dish of the

'koliva' ceremonial food is offered to all deceased villagers (i.e., taken to their graves) by their close kinswomen. On Wednesday and Thursday of Easter week, women clean and paint the graves and sweep the cemetery for a commemoration rite performed at the cemetery by the priest. Women also take regular care of the graves, keeping them clean, keeping their oil-lamps lit, and taking flowers as offerings to the deceased. The commemoration of the dead, which is a pretty wide field of activities, is an almost exclusively female domain. Men partake of the 'koliva' ceremonial food and close kinsmen (husband, son, father, and some of the time, brothers too), attend the commemoration rites - this is the only extent of their participation.

The 'koliva' is a ceremonial food prepared and distributed by women at various commemoration rites which are held for a three-year period after death. Kinswomen and female friends gather at the deceased's house on the eve of a commemoration rite and help boil the ceremonial food, put it in big dishes and decorate it on top. 'Koliva' is made out of sugar, flour, wheat grains, crushed toast, sesame and various spices (cinnamon, nutmeg, etc.). After boiling the 'koliva', they pour it onto a piece of cloth on the table. One woman then fills a big dish with it. As she takes each handful of 'koliva' to put in the dish, she mentions the name of each of her dead relatives in turn (irrespective of the time that has elapsed since their death). The mention of a name is an invitation to the soul of the deceased of that name to come and eat three grains of 'koliva'. It is an indication that the living have not forgotten them. Then the same woman decorates the top of the 'koliva' with gold-and/or silver-coloured almonds and sugar.



The woman who performs that task may or may not be a relative of the deceased for whom the commemoration rite is held, because the decoration of the 'koliva' is regarded as requiring some expertise and an artistic capacity. The woman doing the decoration mentions the names of her own dead relatives, irrespective of whether or not they are also relatives of the deceased person commemorated.

Three years after the burial, the grave is opened and the bones are exhumed. The opening of the grave and exhumation are performed by those who specialize as grave-diggers. The priest performs a ritual after the opening of the grave and pushes aside the corpse's skull. The grave-diggers cleanse the bones in a solution of water and vinegar, but I could not elicit any local explanation as to its choice for that purpose. Then, they hand the cleansed skull over to the attending relatives who kiss it, as a sign of homage and affection.

Nowadays, the grave-diggers place the bones in metal boxes labelled with the deceased's name and the boxes are arranged in a small chamber in the churchyard. In the past (before World War II, my informants say), the bones were thrown in a pit all together (i.e., each individual corpse's bones were not placed separately) at the very spot where they later built up the chamber. At intervals, when the boxes accumulate, the older ones are opened and the bones are thrown into that pit that still exists under the chamber.

After the exhumation, the deceased's kinswomen distribute the ritual food of funerals (bread and cheese) and the ritual food of memorial rites ('koliva') throughout the village. Upon receiving such ritual food, the villagers wish 'May God forgive his/her soul'. On the not so rare occasion that the body is not completely decomposed at the time of the

exhumation, people perceive it as an indication of a sinful soul that finds difficulty in the passage to the after life. They say, 'He/she did not melt; he/she was sinful', or, in the opposite instance, 'his/her bones are all white; he/she has been a saintly person'.

The curse sometimes employed by the villagers against each other on the occasion of severe disputes, 'May his/her bones not melt', refers to the time of exhumation. The inference is that, when the corpse has not disintegrated properly, the soul cannot pass easily and smoothly into the after life. It is evident that for Fourni people the emphasis is on the soul and not on the body, although this is expressed through a metaphorical association with the body.

There do not seem to exist any pollution notions associated with exhumation, in contrast to the polluting state attributed to the body at the time of death. When the deceased's relatives kiss the skull after opening the grave, they 'are not disgusted' by it, as they explained (δεν συχαινοῦνται) - a situation that points to the absence of pollution at that stage after death. Also, after the exhumation ritual, there is no need for anyone who comes in contact with the corpse to cleanse themselves as is the case with contact with the deceased right after death.

In brief, we see that mortuary rites involve a variety of magical beliefs and cleansing practices. The Great Tradition undertakes only the funeral ceremony and the purification of the house of the deceased. But Fourni society is also especially concerned with the highly polluting state of death and the care of the soul after death, and these are dealt with by folk practices and magic.

Again women, are the main actors in this field of magical beliefs and practices. The specialists who undertake the cleansing and ritual

dressings of the dead body are female. The ceremonial food for the alleviation of the deceased's soul, the organization of the ceremonial visit to his house after the funeral, the purification of the house (by breaking a glass), the magical precautions so that the soul does not leave the body before the funeral, are all female activities.

Just as the magic practices and rites upon the birth of a child (i.e., the entrance of a new member into the community) are a female domain exclusively, so also are the folk practices upon death (i.e., the exit of a member from the community). There is one difference though. Men attend a great part of the practices and rites in the case of death and can even cleanse themselves from the pollution afflicted if they approach a dying person, while their absence from the magical realm concerning birth is complete.

Nevertheless, after the burial, men's concern with the deceased drops radically. It is women who make sure that the soul's needs are fulfilled, mourn and take care of commemoration.

The prominence of the women's role in the magical practices in the realm of death becomes even more significant when we consider that the passage into death and the care of the souls of the dead is not a matter for the domestic domain, but a major concern of the community as a whole.

It has been argued (Bloch, 1982) that in death rituals, women are symbolically associated with the pollution and sadness while fertility and continuity are located elsewhere. It seems to me that the data from Fourni do not agree with such a hypothesis.

Women in Fourni have a major role in funeral rituals, but that role does not entail that women alone come in contact with the polluting state of death. Both men and women keep the night vigil over the dead body,

and have to cleanse themselves afterwards; both men and women kiss the deceased at the church funeral rite, and both men and women kiss the skull after the exhumation. The carrying of the deceased (first to the floor for the night vigil, then into the coffin, and then in the open coffin to the church, and from there to the cemetery) is performed by men. Men, as well as women, come in contact with the pollution of death.

The sorrow expressed at death is again not an exclusively female manifestation. Close kinsmen (a son, a husband, a father, or even a brother) may shed tears and utter exclamations and phrases of grief. This is perceived as a sign of affection for the deceased, and praised as such by the villagers.

Condolences are offered to both male and female relatives who gather at the deceased's house for that particular reason after the funeral - in that gathering they partake of ritual foods, upon which they receive the condolences and the wish 'Long may you live' (Ζωη σ' ελογου σας), and they also believe that by returning to the deceased's house after the funeral they leave the pollution there.

Fourni people are highly emotional, easily overcome, overtly expressing feelings of sorrow and frustration, and much given to dramatizing highly all occasions of anxiety and grief. Women can be described as even more highly dramatizing themselves than men through hysterics and fainting fits. Strikingly, though, at funerals there seems to be a tendency to curb over-dramatization and avoid scenes of hysteria. The impression I gained is as if there is an effort to play down the feelings of grief and anxiety evoked by death. On the vigil night, any close relatives who are especially upset, are sedated and put to sleep. Similarly, at the funeral, a prostrate relative (e.g., a young wife) is usually sedated.

I would say that the 'pain' (πόνος) caused by death does not carry the cultural stress reported by Danforth (1982) on Potamia. It is significant that in Fourni we do not encounter the female laments reported from other Greek communities (Danforth, 1982; Caraveli, 1986). In comparison to Danforth's material on Potamia, I would say that Fourni people (women as well as men) seem to have a far more fatalistic and realistic acceptance of death.

The manifestation of sadness upon death also depends on individual circumstances. At the death of old parents there is not so much display of grief: a few tears, a few exclamations of grief. At the death of a young spouse, the manifestation of overt grief is much more pronounced. During my fieldwork, a forty-year-old man lost his wife, and the day after the funeral he was carried to the island of Samos to a hospital because he had injured himself banging his head on the wall. At the death of a child, even greater grief is displayed, mainly by the parents.

Also, men usually wear a black badge on their arm for a few days as a sign of mourning, while women dress in black for a long time. However, on the death of a young wife or a child, a man will mourn for one or more years, as a sign of which he grows a beard.

The sadness in death is not associated exclusively with women in Fourni, though we may say that it is associated to a greater extent with women than with men. Women weep more openly and more easily plunge into hysterics. Also, women are the chief mourners, dressing in black for long periods of time; as they themselves say, 'We carry the mourning'.

In my view, women's role upon death in Fourni does not really agree with a hypothesis of the symbolic representation of sadness and pollution through women. I see their role in the circumstances of death more as

the role of social agents who carry the overall responsibility for the death rites of passage. I also see their mourning role as part of their role of responsibility in the death rites of passage.

I think that women's role as the principal mourners is not associated solely with the sadness aspect of death. Close kinswomen wear black for a period of three years, which is the time between the burial and the exhumation, i.e., the time between death and completion of the passage into the after life. During the three years of mourning, these close kinswomen of the deceased take care of the memorial rites which are believed to help the soul pass into the after life. Upon receiving the memorial ritual food, people wish 'May God forgive his/her soul'. In my view, the fact that women are in mourning for the three years until the exhumation also relates to their role in the care of the souls of the dead. It is not only a sign of sorrow, but also a sign of the important role they have in the death rites of passage.

According to the hypothesis (Bloch, 1982) that associates women with pollution and sadness in death, fertility and continuity are located elsewhere. The data from Fourni again do not quite agree with such a hypothesis. As I have said, the emphasis is on the soul rather than the body. A series of practices and rites, performed exclusively by women, are oriented towards the care of the soul and helping it to pass smoothly into the after life. The preparation and distribution of ritual food at the funeral and in the memorial services (ritual food associated with the care of the soul in its passage from life to after life) is an exclusively female affair.

The ritual food of the memorial services ('koliva') is believed to be 'highly nutritious' and as such it is also greatly urged upon children.

We see here a fertility element located in the ritual food of 'koliva' which is produced by the women. Another symbolic representation of fertility is encountered in the night vigil for the deceased in the form of sexual jokes and stories narrated mostly by women.

At the same time, we cannot locate any fertility symbolic representations exclusively associated with men. Actually, men do not perform any ritual as we have seen. That presents a problem in accepting Bloch's (1982) suggestion that women are given death while the social order is reaffirmed elsewhere, in our interpretation of the material on Fourni. Of course, we cannot ignore the priest's role (traditional authority in Christian society), but what has especially struck me in Fourni is that the villagers accord him the role of performing the funeral rite, memorial rites, and exhumation rite, but at the same time they do not know or understand what these rites constitute.

I think that, just as the Great Tradition is a body of rituals that the Fourni people have incorporated in their culture in the form of customary practices lacking an explicit and articulated belief system, in the same way they have incorporated the Christian funeral rituals performed by the priest without understanding the continuity and fertility notions articulated in them.

We may say that here we have a communication situation where the message and codes are absent. Not only is the language in which these rites are phrased incomprehensible to the villagers, but they do not even have any notion as to why the rites are performed, and to what they refer.

It has also been argued (Bloch, 1982; Bloch and Parry, 1982) that in many cultures there is a symbolic association between death and female sexuality. In Fourni this does not seem to be the case. I could not

find any implicit or explicit association between death and sexuality. In addition, the Fourni people do not associate female gender with the biological order and male gender with the spiritual or cultural order, and no such symbolic association is encountered in relation to death, either.

It seems that the line of argument followed by Bloch (1982), and Bloch and Parry (1982), which results from and agrees with the ethnographic data from other societies, does not explain the Fourni case. It seems to me that in Fourni, women have a most important role in the death rites of passage in all its various phases, and the gender dichotomy is not employed as a symbolic vehicle for the expression of different aspects of death.

g) The Sexual Division of Labour in Magic

The most striking point upon reviewing the data on the magic domain in the community of Fourni seems to be the prominent role women have in it contrasted with the minimal participation of men.

First of all, quite strikingly, there is no evidence of magical practices specific to male activities, such as fishing. We only encounter a few beliefs in mystical powers. Fishermen are apprehensive over meeting someone who is said to have a 'catching' Evil Eye which may lead them to postpone a sea trip. Encounter with the priest (a person with mystical powers) is also believed to affect a fishing expedition and 'bring ill luck' (φερνελ γρουσουῖτα), therefore fishermen hasten to grab their genitals as a magical precaution. Any discussion concerning a fishing trip with a 'bad luck' villager may again undermine the success of the trip. Fishermen are especially careful of the person who will untie the painter upon starting on a sea trip: it needs to be a 'good luck' individual, and on



no account a priest. The sight of a black cat and the catching of crabs are ill omens for fishing. Tuesday is a bad day for pushing a boat into the sea (once a year boats are beached for repairs). A mayflower wreath is placed on all boats on 1 May to ensure the vitality and productiveness of its crew (note, though, that it is women who make and place the wreaths on the boats). In brief, there are only a few magical beliefs concerning the sphere of production, and fewer practices and rites for men.

But what is most striking is the evident absence of men in active roles within those other spheres of social life where magic flourishes (those realms of magic which I have discussed in this chapter). As we have seen, men figure in certain realms of magical practices and rites in an attending role, while they do not figure at all in others. This fact is rather surprising when we consider what these realms of magic are about.

Our data show that in Fourni society magic concerns:

1. The protection of the household and its members;
2. Illness, death and grave misfortune (the Evil Eye , cursing, and the magico-medical field);
3. The rites of passage on the three major stages of the social life-cycle.

It is obvious that magic is not restricted to the domestic domain - if it were, women's prominence in magical practices could be related to their role of responsibility for the general welfare of the domestic domain. Instead, magic extends into spheres of major concern for the community as a whole - a point that becomes even more obvious when we consider the rites of passage. We would therefore expect at least both men and women to be

involved in magical activities that have to do with these spheres of community concern. Yet, it is women who are the actors in all fields of magical enterprise. Why is this so?

The explanation lies, in my view, in the nature of male/female dynamics in the community of Fourni. It has to do with the relation between men's position in the social structure and women's position in it. On the one hand, men do not have any powerful positions in the social structure, and on the other, women in Fourni have assumed important (though not powerful either) roles in it.

As I have discussed the male-female relationship extensively in Chapter Two, I will not go into this matter in detail here, but will outline the main points to elicit my argument on the relation of the sexual division of labour in magic and the overall social position and social roles of men and women in this community.

My argument invokes two analytical points: (1) that men have no powerful positions in the social structure, and (2) that women do have important roles in the social structure. These points are drawn upon consideration of the economic sphere, the political sphere, and the organizational principles that regulate social relations and aim at social cohesion and social reproduction.

Let us first consider men's roles and position in these three areas of social life. In the sphere of production, we have seen that there are no relations of exploitation within the boundaries of the community. In fishing, men own the means of production for exploiting the sea (boat, fishing equipment), but they do not own their basic means of production - the sea. Surplus product and economic differentiation are not the result of exploitation of surplus labour, but the result of differences in the

fishing equipment and techniques. The only instance of relations of exploitation concerns the Egyptians recruited in the 'gri-gri' fishing fleets, and accordingly it does not affect the economic relations among the members of the Fourni community. Similarly, the exploitation relations involved in the employment of villagers in cruise-boats and cargo-boats at Piraeus do not affect the economic relations within the community of Fourni. The absence of economic exploitation makes for lack of powerful positions in the economic sphere.

In the sphere of politics, there is no power differentiation either. The only political roles in the community of Fourni are those of the Community Council President and the members of the Council. But the political functions of the Community Council are principally bureaucratic (records of births, weddings, deaths, ownership of land and livestock) and negotiatory (requests for government loans for public services; installation of electricity, the appointment of a doctor, road and school constructions, the expected construction of a harbour, etc.). In other words, the Community Council is not vested with real political power that can affect social relations. In addition, the Fourni community does not have a class structure or a stratification system. There are only prestige differentiations relating to the differential economic prosperity of the village households - a situation that does not give rise to power positions or roles of political authority. There is also social differentiation in terms of prestige status (the President of the Community Council, the midwife, the priest, the candlelighter, etc.), which is distinguishable from power status.

In as far as the organizational principles that regulate social relations and aim at social cohesion are concerned, men again do not have

positions of power. Actually, far from it; men are engrossed in their economic activities and male socializing in the coffeehouse which, in Fourni, as I have argued in Chapter Two, cannot be described as a major public arena for arranging community issues or other major problems.

In brief, there are no power positions through which men might attain a higher social status either among themselves or in comparison to women. In addition, there are no fields of social activity where men might assume major responsibilities in the regulation of social relations and the community functioning as a body.

Let us now turn to the second scale of my argument, i.e., that women have major roles in the social organization. This does not mean that women have power positions in the social structure any more than men do. My point is that they too are involved in the economic sphere and the political sphere, as well as in other social activities which in so many other societies are exercised by men and which concern the regulation of social relations, social functions essential to the community, and social cohesion.

As we have seen, women were considerably involved in the local economic activities (until very recently, when we notice a shift). For as long as Fourni was an agricultural community, men and women collaborated in agricultural and pastoral work. Lately, a considerable number of women engaged in the cultivation of gardens and sometimes the trading of their products, as well as in a variety of other forms of local trade (the selling of imported goods in the community), and a few even joined their husbands in small-scale fishing activities and sea trade.

Women are also enterprising in local politics. They participate in disputes and their settlement (which is informal among the individuals

concerned and their kin), are active on matters of public welfare services, fiercely protect their voting choice, are fanatical in their political views and support of political parties, and more generally have always a precise viewpoint of their own along which they argue most vehemently on all issues of both local politics and the politics of the outside world.

But, what is more, in the community of Fourni most of those issues of social interaction, which in other communities usually belong to the realm of the coffeehouse, seem to be handled by women. Decisions on schooling, education and job-training; choices on the employment of boys at an early age; marriage arrangements; the provision of houses and dowries for daughters; the undertaking of house repairs or extensions, the construction of new buildings, and the furnishing of house equipment; full responsibility for all matters of the domestic domain; management of family expenditure and saving; organization and preparations for religious celebrations and rites of passage; interaction with all public welfare services - these are all female responsibilities. In other words, Fourni women are active social agents in what has been termed the public domain and is a male domain par excellence in so many other Mediterranean societies.

In addition, Fourni women are the principal actors in the regulation of social relations that aim at social cohesion. Through the matrifocal kinship network, women's manipulation of visiting patterns on celebrations and name days, their handling of the formation of friendship ties for group entertainment within the household and in community events, and their choice of trading liaisons and associations with the building sector (electricians, painters, etc.), the structuring of social interaction is in the hands of women. Men may have personal friendship networks within the realm of the coffeehouse, but outside it (i.e., in the domestic domain

and communal gatherings, including mixed company entertainment in the coffeehouses in the evenings) they accept the female patterning of social interaction. In that sense, women seem to be the principal social agents in the co-ordination of community relations and the promotion of social cohesion.

Upon considering these data on the relation between men's social roles and women's social roles in Fourni, the evidence of female prominence in the sphere of magic no longer seems surprising. Since women - far more than men - are so active on all levels of social function essential for the reproduction and cohesion of the community, it is not surprising that they have also undertaken the magical realm that confronts matters of major community concern, such as death, misfortune, and rites of passage.

Danforth (1982) has argued that given the sexual division of labour that exists in rural Greece, caring for other people in life, as well as caring for them in death, is a task performed exclusively by women (1982:119). In rural Greece, men occupy the important positions in social structure, while women embody social ties. The lives of women acquire meaning through the maintenance of social relationships with other members of their families, and therefore it is necessary for them to maintain, even after death, the social relationships they enjoyed with the deceased (1982:137-8).

I quite agree with Danforth that in rural Greece women embody social ties. But while, because of the social organization of Potamia, these social ties seem to be confined to family and kinship relations only, in Fourni the situation is different. Fourni women have an important role in creating and reproducing social relationships that bind the community together (as I have discussed at some length in Chapter Two). Therefore, their exclusive involvement in fulfilling the obligations to the dead does

not relate only to their role in maintaining the kin bonds and caring for their family members. It also relates to their major role in maintaining other social relationships that articulate the community. The same can be said, in my view, for women's major involvement in the other rites of passage too.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

THE POSITION AND ROLE OF WOMEN IN SOCIAL  
ORGANIZATION AND SYMBOLIC SYSTEMS

I have discussed separately the religious spheres of the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition and the sphere of magic in the community of Fourni. I will now concentrate on a review of the relation between these symbolic systems and the social division of labour.

Symbols are presented as universals in any given society, but in fact they retain the differentiation that constitutes the social. Social differentiation and social ranking are reproduced in symbolic systems and presented as the natural order of the world. Symbols are not independent of social relationships, but interwoven with them. Even more, as Bourdieu argues, symbols are the instruments of knowledge and communication, they make possible consensus on the sense of the social world which makes a contribution towards reproducing the social order; 'logical' integration is the precondition of 'moral' integration (1979:79). The symbols which concern human beings teach individuals to recognize and accept their place in the community. It is in that sense that social relations and social roles are already present in symbolism.

Through the study of symbolic systems, we can further understand the male-female dynamics in a community. Symbolic systems constitute a concentrated expression of the sexual division of labour and the relationship between the two sexes in general (i.e., a specific part of the overall social relations), as well as the mechanisms of their reproduction.

Let us, therefore, consider each of the three symbolic systems in Fourni from the viewpoint of the sexual division of labour within



them, on the one hand, and their symbolic conceptualization of the male and the female social position, on the other.

In the sphere of the Great Tradition, we have noticed that female attendance is far more intensive and extensive than male attendance, while female participation in church performances is of less prominence than male participation. I have argued that this power distinction of gender roles in the religious roles accorded to them within the Great Tradition derives from the Christian theology. But, as I have said, the Great Tradition is not an indigenous religious system, but one formulated in other societies and only imported into Fourni. The point I want to stress is that the religious beliefs contained in it are similarly imported and hence external to the social form of the community of Fourni. In that sense, the allotment of more prominent roles to men in the participation in church ceremonies in the Great Tradition cannot be interpreted as representing the male-female relationship within the community of Fourni.

Instead, it is in the sphere of the Little Tradition that we find the representation of the male-female relation (among other social relations) in concentrated form on the symbolic level. As I have mentioned before, there seems to be some kind of division of labour between the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition, according to which the Great Tradition seems to have undertaken primarily the realm of religious rites while the Little Tradition has undertaken the elaboration of a local religious belief system. Thus, it is within the Little Tradition that we ought to look for conceptualizations and symbols that express (among other things) the differentiation that constitutes the social.

On the level of the symbolic conceptualization of male and female in the Little Tradition, we do not seem to encounter any ideas of hierarchy. We have a pantheon of deities (the Virgin Mary, and male and female saints) of equal hierarchical order (radically diverging from the hierarchical pantheon of Christian theology). The Virgin Mary is not approached in a role of mediator between the devout and God or Christ as in other Mediterranean and Latin-American Catholic peasant communities. Instead, she is a deity in her own right.

Similarly, there does not seem to be any differentiation in status between male and female saints. The only difference is that the Fourni pantheon includes a greater number of male saints - St. Nikolas, St. John, St. George, St. Minas, St. Theologos, St. Konstantinos, St. Taxiarchis, St. Andreas - in comparison to the number of female saints - St. Marina. However, if we examine who are the saints featuring principally in the complex of dreams, miraculous happenings and icons, as well as in vows, we see a more balanced situation in the relationship between male and female deities. The primary divine figures of the religious complex of the Little Tradition are St. Minas, St. John, and the Virgin Mary. In addition, it is also noticeable that the Virgin Mary is worshipped under different forms denoted by different affixed adjectives: the Virgin Mary the Mirtithiotissa, the Virgin Mary the Old Woman (η Γεροντισσα) the Virgin Mary the Consoling (η Παράμυθια).

Finally, we notice a trend for men to address or be addressed by male saints, while women address or are addressed by saints of either sex (though perhaps they address or are addressed by the Virgin Mary slightly more). But this point does not seem to carry any significant implications of hierarchical differentiation between male and female.

Another symbolic representation of the male-female relationship resides in notions of purity and pollution. The data from Fourni have not revealed special stress in this conceptual plane. Both men and women after sexual contact, as well as menstruating women, should not come in direct contact with the supernatural (they should not kiss the Holy Icons when visiting the church) or take part in religious rituals. Notions of pollution are more highly stressed in the realm of rites of passage (concerning the stage of transition) and are dealt with in the sphere of magic. In religion, we do not have pollution beliefs that concern male or female nature. Pollution concerns sexual contact and the Little Tradition dictates avoidance of contact between human sex and the sacred (a theme highly elaborated in the dramatic field of dreams and miracles).

On the level of the sexual division of religious labour within the Little Tradition, again there do not seem to be any pointers of significant social differentiation between male and female. In Fourni, both men and women engage in vows, in contrast to the ethnographic findings in other Mediterranean Christian communities. Still, it seems that women make a far greater number of vows than men do. However, I do not think that this relates to a status differentiation between men and women, but rather to the sexual division of social labour. The excess in the number of vows made by women relates to the content of these vows: they are requests concerning pregnancy and childbirth, the health and life of young children, and the safety of husbands at sea. In other words, the greater number of vows made by women corresponds to a larger field of female responsibilities and concern in matters of life and death - a field that derives from their reproductive role,

their socially more emphasised parental role and their role as wives of men who face the dangers of nature in exploiting the sea.

In the realm of dreams, apparitions, miraculous happenings and miraculous icons, we encounter a balanced participation of the two sexes. Once again, there does not appear to be any differentiation between the two sexes which we could pinpoint as an expression of differentiation between men's social position and women's social position.

One aspect of the Little Tradition where women are much more involved than men is in keeping chapels and shrines clean and whitewashed and their Holy Oil-lamp burning. The greater female involvement here (together with the more extensive female attendance in the Great Tradition and the female predominance in magical practices and rites) relates, in my view, to the secular sexual division of labour and the role of women in social organization.

This is the same line of argument I have pursued while discussing the sexual division of labour within the realm of magic. I believe that the extensive female attendance in the Great Tradition, the women's concern with the caretaking of the devotional places of the Little Tradition, and the prominence of women in the field of magical practices and rites, all relate to the women's social position in the articulation of Fourni society.

I believe that women's position in any society is determined by the extent and nature of their participation in social organization and social reproduction. I would argue that, in Fourni, women have a significant social position. Rather than being restricted solely within the limits of the domestic domain, women play a major role in the patterning of social relations essential for social cohesion and the reproduction of the community structure. They have major roles

in the kinship organization, the domestic organization, the networks of social relations that make for the articulation of the community (friendship networks, neighbourly ties, local trade liaisons, transactions of services in the public sector), religion, magic and rites of passage. Also, women have an emphatic presence in the political sphere, which moreover is characterized by the lack of relations of domination and positions of power, and therefore is not a source of power for men either. Until World War II, women were engaged in economic production in the same way as men, and today a few women are still involved in economic enterprises. The gradual change in the participation of women in the production after World War II does not seem to have affected their social position (as yet).

Thus, I think that Fourni women's greater participation (compared to men) in the sphere of religion and their prominent role in the sphere of magic and the rites of passage are a consequent continuation of their major role in the structuring of social relations and social reproduction.

I realize this is a controversial statement in the context of earlier anthropological findings on the male-female relationship in the Mediterranean. I, myself, would surely be at least sceptical if I was confronted with such a viewpoint before starting fieldwork. But I think that the data from Fourni, however striking, fully support my conclusion.

When I started the project for research on the correlation between religion and the male-female relationship, I was expecting fieldwork findings that would support the well-known argument on an association of female religious involvement with women's role of responsibility for the welfare of the domestic domain. But in Fourni I was confronted with the unexpected fact that female activities are by no means restricted

within the domestic domain. Far from it, the Fourni women are major social agents in matters of social organization, social integration, social cohesion and the reproduction of Fourni social structure. Subsequently, I was forced to review my original viewpoint.

My working hypothesis of a correlation between the sexual division of religious labour and the sexual division of secular labour was not disputed by the evidence of the data. What altered was the evidence on the sexual division of labour on both the secular level and the religious level. It extended far beyond what I had expected, but still corresponded to each other. In secular labour, women play a major role in social organization and social reproduction; correspondingly, in folk religion and especially in magic, women have major roles not only aiming at the welfare of the domestic domain, but also at matters of community concern (such as the rites of passage). Both in secular and magico-religious labour, women occupy a position extending far beyond the boundaries of the domestic domain.

I think that some of the anthropological attempts at an analysis of the sexual division of religious labour and the symbolic representation of the male-female relationship, have led us astray because they have not taken adequately into consideration the significance in the distinction between the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition. Actually, the problem starts from the fact that folk religious practices have been neglected in anthropological studies, leading to unintentional distortion of social reality. The neglect in research on folk tradition and the consequent missing of the significance of a distinction between the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition in small peasant communities, has led to a questioning of the correlation between the sexual division of religious labour and the sexual division of secular labour.

Davis (1984) argues that an explanation of female religious involvement in terms of the sexual division of secular labour is simplistic. He considers that it cannot account for the difference between Islamic and Christian societies which, Davis holds, have basically the same sexual division of secular labour, while the sexual segregation in the religious sphere is different. He suggests that the explanation is to be found within the sphere of religion itself, and specifically the Christian doctrine on the spiritual nature of men and women.

In my view, there are two pitfalls in Davis' analysis. The first concerns the comparison of the sexual division of religious and secular labour in Islamic and Christian communities. He fails to see that in Christian societies we do not frequently encounter such strict female seclusion as in Islam, and female activities are not so hindered as in Islam. In the majority of Christian communities women frequent market places on their own (i.e., not so strict principle of female seclusion in the patterning of the sexual division of secular labour) and share the same devotional places as men (i.e., not so strict principle of female seclusion in the patterning of the sexual division of religious labour).

Davis' second pitfall concerns the well-known problem of 'the hidden world' in Islam. Just as in the Christian communities, women have been reported to undertake religious activities associated with their responsibilities in the domestic domain, in Muslim communities women have also been reported to do the same (Er. Friedl, 1980; Betteridge, 1980; Fernea and Fernea, 1972; Bybee, 1978).

Davis, disputing the correlation between the sexual division of secular labour and of religious labour, reaches the conclusion of 'a

discrepancy between the high place women achieve in local religious practices and the low place the doctrinal view of their spiritual nature allows'. He creates an anthropological paradox: a conflict between the position of women in religious labour and the position of women in religious beliefs - which then he strives to account for in terms of church manoeuvres in face of political restraints on its power. I am saying this would be an anthropological paradox because it is a hypothesis that could be compatible only with the case of female roles threatening the existent social structure - a situation that by no means characterizes Mediterranean Christian peasant communities.

The complications, to which Davis has been driven, arise in my view from the fact that he does not distinguish between the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition. He seeks to relate a feature that belongs to a great extent to the Little Tradition, namely, female roles in local religious practices, to a feature that belongs to the Great Tradition, namely, the female position in the Christian theological doctrine.

W. Christian (1972) has done exactly the same. He proposes an explanation of the sexual segregation in the religious sphere in Mediterranean Christian societies in terms of the difference between the two sexes in their approach to the notion of sin. He argues that women are more involved in religion than men because of the sense of impurity laid on them by the Christian doctrine and their consequent feeling that they have something to expiate. Here again, Christian seeks to account for folk religious practices in terms of a distinct religious system, the Great Tradition.

Even Campbell (1964), in his study of the Greek Sarakatsani, misses the significance of a distinction between the imported Great Tradition



(and its subsequently adapted and re-elaborated local form) and magico-religious beliefs that are an indigenous product of the Sarakatsani community. He therefore clusters together the Devil and the evil spirits associated with natural phenomena ('Some manifestations of the Devil are plural and of either sex'). But the Devil is a figure of the hierarchical pantheon of the Great Tradition, the personification of the notion of sin, relating to the belief in the supremacy of God in his role as the Creator of the world; while the evil spirits, residing in the natural environment surrounding the village of the Sarakatsani, are creatures of a magico-religious realm which, through animistic notions, delimits the boundary between the community and nature and expresses man's relationship with his natural environment.

There becomes obvious the paramount importance of studying the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition as distinct religious realms, co-existing in Christian peasant communities, and of delimiting their meaning and their function in different social settings, before tackling the general question of the sexual division of religious labour and the conceptualization of the female position in religious beliefs.

The data from Fourni have shown that the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition may be quite distinct religious realms, deserving attentive examination separately - which will then pave the way to an understanding of the position and role of women in religion. Neglecting the distinction between the Great Tradition and the Little Tradition, which co-exist (usually in a symbiotic relationship) in the religious realm of Mediterranean peasant communities (a co-existence clearly pointed out by the scattered data on women's folk religious practices in this area), very easily leads to a distortion of social reality. Folk

religious beliefs and practices, that is the Little Tradition, as well as the realm of magic in Greek communities, and in the Mediterranean more generally, have not yet received the anthropological attention they deserve. Perhaps this is due to the rather recently developed anthropological interest in the peasant societies of the Mediterranean. Perhaps, after the wealth of religious and magical spheres in African societies, Mediterranean religion and magic were not considered interesting enough. Whatever the reasons for this neglect, I believe that the pursuit of research on these symbolic systems will bring to light quite interesting data and, moreover, will be of invaluable help to a deeper understanding of phenomena of the other social levels, such as the position and role of women in these societies.

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